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MYSTERY MAGAZINE

DETECTIVE STORIES

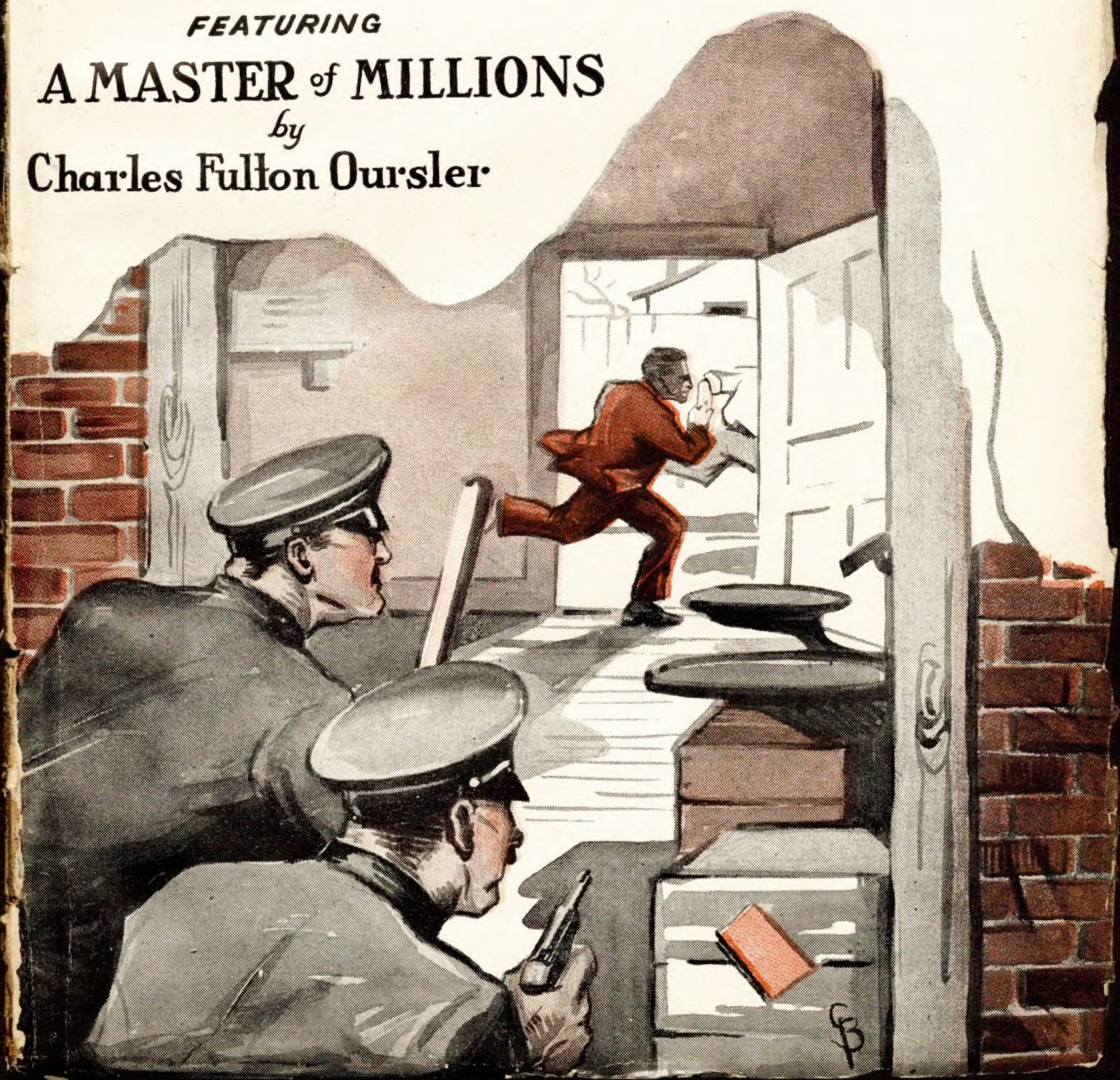
JANUARY 1, 1923 VOL. V No. 123

FEATURING

A MASTER of MILLIONS

by

Charles Fulton Oursler



MYSTERY MAGAZINE

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Just See What Is Coming!

FOR some time past we have been exercising the greatest care in selecting the contents of this publication. We want our readers to get the very best stories procurable. Sometimes only one story in a hundred examined measures up to the standard we require for our friends. Consequently you are getting nothing but the best efforts of the best authors. Our next feature story is going to interest you immensely. It is the finest novelette ever written by Hamilton Craigie. The title is "The Secret of Room 13." There is a power and forcefulness about the detective and his startling work in this tale that will grip your attention and hold it to the end. Besides, there is a baffling mystery well sustained throughout.

The concluding chapters of Katherine Stagg's remarkable serial will be published and there will be an assortment of short stories better than any we have ever issued. John Bradford contributes the story of a courageous policeman who sets his honor above every other consideration in the story "All Coppers Aren't Easy." There is a splendid plot in Lloyd Lonegan's story "A Splash of Green Paint." It is purely a detective story woven around circumstantial evidence threatening to convict a young girl. We will have a "crook" story in the next number by Jack Bechdolt entitled "The Lure of a Kiss." This is one of the most ingenious short stories ever written and has an unexpected twist at the end that will surprise you. Another of the short stories is "The Red Bandana," by Edgar Daniel Kramer. As all our readers know every story we have ever printed written by this author was very interesting. You will like this one.

Among the special articles there will be a remarkable account entitled "Scientific Conviction of Criminals." It was written by Carl H. Getz and shows how cold, calculating men of science aid the police department with the latest and most approved inventions. Another particularly interesting article is entitled "The Game of Bunco" and illustrates one of the most dangerous games confronting the police department. There will also be a number of very interesting short articles.

In fact the next number will contain more and better material than you can get in any similar publication of its price. We have recently accumulated a number of fine stories by celebrated writers and special articles on interesting subjects.

THE EDITOR.

A MASTER OF MILLIONS

by Charles Fulton Oursler

CHAPTER ONE

IT was after two o'clock in the morning when Brent Garland, detective, after a damp and solitary walk, returned to the handsomely furnished rooms that he occupied on the tenth floor of a tall building devoted to bachelor apartments.

Brent kept only one servant, an old darky. Despite the lateness of the hour, Isom was still up, and exercised the prerogative of scolding Brent when he took his dripping coat.

"Lan's sake, Mr. Brent," he protested, "why for you gwine traipsin' aroun' in de rain dis ungodly time o' night?"

"I—I didn't appreciate the fact that it was raining, Isom," Brent apologized.

"Didn' 'preshate 'twus rainin'?" Isom ejaculated, dropping the coat in his astonishment. "Lan's sake, whut ails de man? Must er been a mighty 'portant case you wus cogitatin' erbout, not to feel dem heavy drops!"

Brent Garland was a private detective. He *had been* "cogitatin' erbout" a mighty important case, the most important of his strenuous life, in fact; so very important that he had walked in the pouring rain for more than a quarter of an hour before he realized that he was wet.

"Young lady been a-callin' you on de telephone mighty persistent," Isom informed Brent when the latter began to change to dry clothing. "Bell been a-ringin' off an' on ever since midnight."

"Did she give her name? Was it Miss Grant?"

"Didn't soun' like Miss Mildred's voice. Kinda sweet-like, like hers, too, but diff'runt. Scared-like—pow'ful scared, like she wus er needin' a 'teckative an' er needin' him mighty bad!"

No, Brent reflected, it could not have been Mildred Grant who called. There was no possible reason why she should telephone him repeatedly an hour after she had told him that she could not marry him.

That night Brent had taken Mildred Grant to the theatre. When they returned to her boarding-house Brent followed her up the stone steps. He could not leave her until he had spoken the words that had been struggling for utterance all the evening—words that he had wanted to say ever since he had known her.

"Wait a moment, Mildred," Brent begged as she opened the door through which he

could see a hallway dimly illuminated by a single light. "Wait a moment; there's something I've got to ask you. Will—will you marry me?"

Before she could reply a slight noise in the hallway behind her caused the girl to turn and look. A man about thirty, a rather handsome, flashy sort of fellow, had come out of an inner room and had halted near the stairway when he saw Mildred standing on the porch.

Brent was surprised at the flush that overspread Mildred's face when she saw this young man. She hurriedly replied to the detective.

"I'm sorry, Brent," she said, and there was the suspicion of a tremor in her voice. "You are the finest man I know, the best friend I ever had, but I don't love you. I have promised to marry another man! I'll tell you about him—some other time."

The door closed behind her a moment later.

Somehow it had never entered into Brent's calculations that Mildred Grant would refuse him. He loved her so much that he had taken it for granted that she also loved him.

He felt an almost uncontrollable desire to break open the door and kill the man he had just seen. He knew from Mildred's flushed face that it was this man she had promised to marry.

He conquered this impulse, temporarily at least, in the long walk which lasted until the realization that he was soaking wet sent him to his rooms.

That was the mighty important case he had been "cogitatin' erbout"—his own tragedy.

Brent felt that he could not sleep, that he needed to work. He sent Isom to bed and reread a special-delivery letter that he had received just before he went to the theatre. The letter was from a friend of his in Washington, a member of the Secret Service:

"DEAR BRENT: You probably read in the papers that old Doc Callaway, whom you sent up for counterfeiting when you were with us, escaped from jail three months ago. Two weeks ago he was shot and killed while resisting recapture. While he was dying he was quite bitter against the man who shot him and boasted that, in spite of everything we could do, this country would continue to be flooded with bills every bit as good as the Treasury turns out. This confirms rumors we have had before. Keep your eyes wide open."

The doorbell rang. Brent pushed the letter into a pigeon-hole of his desk and hurried to open the door before a second ring could disturb the slumbers of the old darky who had waited up for him so long.

And then the detective got the surprise of his life.

Mildred Grant, the girl he loved, was standing in the hallway!

CHAPTER TWO

BUT it was not like the Mildred Grant whom Brent had known for three months, not like the girl who had sat so quietly by his side at the theatre a few hours before.

Instead it was a flushed, excited, a terribly agitated young woman.

And with her was the stranger whom Brent had glimpsed in the boarding-house—the man toward whom Brent felt such an instinctive hatred; the man he would have liked to kill!

He was here at the door to Brent's apartment with the girl both of them loved!

What could be important enough to cause Mildred Grant to make such an unusual visit through the pouring rain at half-past two o'clock in the morning?

So agitated was Mildred that she forgot to introduce her companion to Brent when he ushered them into his sitting-room.

The detective forebore questioning her until she could recover her composure. Nor did he speak to the stranger, who also remained quiet.

At last Mildred was able to speak.

"You are surprised to see me at this hour?"

"I am surprised," Brent answered, "but glad nevertheless."

"I would not have bothered you at this hour," Mildred went on. "Oscar begged me not to come; said that you could do nothing. But I know you can, and I was afraid to wait until morning. It would be too late!"

"What would be too late?"

"Oscar's life is in danger, and you are the only one who can save him!"

"What is the danger?"

"Unless he does something before daylight he will be killed!"

"Does what?"

"He did not tell me how great the danger was until after I returned from the theatre," Mildred continued. "Then I telephoned and telephoned you, but each time Isom said you had not yet returned. Finally I forced Oscar to come here with me."

"What is it that he must do before daylight?" Brent again asked.

The stranger now spoke.

"Perhaps I had better explain, Mr. Garland," he began. "I came to this city about two weeks ago with two objects in view: To marry the girl to whom I have been engaged for years, and to earn enough money to support her after marriage in the style in which I want my wife to live.

"My name is Oscar Smith. Mildred and I were born in the same town in Ohio. She came here six months ago to earn her living. Three months ago I got back from Germany, where I had been a prisoner during the war. I could not stay in Ohio without Mildred, so I sold out the small business I had for five thousand dollars."

"That money was stolen from him, Brent," Mildred stated. "Oscar is too frank and honest to deal with the sharpers in this town."

"How was it stolen?" Brent asked.

"I am ashamed to say, Mr. Garland," answered Smith. "I thought I saw a way to quadruple it, but—well, it was taken from me."

Mildred glanced at the clock.

"Let me tell the rest," she said, "or we may be too late. Oscar was so mortified at losing the money that he did not tell me anything about it for a week. Then he tried to find work, but failed.

"I didn't know he was penniless. Why, Brent, he went two days without anything to eat. Then there came to him what seemed to be a great streak of luck."

"What was that?"

"He was sitting in Bryant Park watching the clouds and wondering what he would do if it rained. When he glanced down he was surprised to see a sealed, unaddressed envelope in his lap. You would never guess what it contained."

"What?"

"A hundred-dollar bill, a smaller unaddressed envelope with a two-cent stamp on it, and this!"

She handed Brent a slip of paper on which the following was typewritten:

"Half of this hundred is yours, and more will follow if you will implicitly obey instructions. Get this bill changed, put fifty dollars in the inclosed envelope, and drop it, unaddressed, into the mail-box at the corner of 40th street and 6th avenue at exactly 4:45 this afternoon. Fail and you will die.

"A Friend of the Down-and-Outs."

"The hundred-dollar bill was counterfeit?" asked the detective.

"That is the strangest part of it," said Smith. "It was *not!* When I changed it at the bank I asked the cashier to inspect it carefully, and he pronounced it as good as gold!"

"And the stamped envelope?"

"I was only too willing to follow instructions. I put a fifty-dollar bill in it, and mailed it as directed."

"But what has this to do with what must be done before daylight?" Brent asked.

His question increased Mildred's agitation. She hurried with her explanation.

"I'll tell you in a moment. That incident alone was surprising enough," she said, "but it was not all. The same thing has occurred again and again. Several times a day Oscar found an envelope containing a hundred-dollar bill and a note telling him in what mail-box to put half of that amount. Some-

times the envelopes are stuck in his pockets; sometimes he found them in the books and newspapers he reads, under his plate at the restaurant, everywhere! He has received five thousand dollars during the past two weeks!"

"Were all of the hundred-dollar bills genuine?"

"Every one," declared Mildred. "I changed some of them at banks for Oscar. The paying tellers did not hesitate to take them. I told the first one I was terribly afraid of getting hold of a counterfeit, and he assured me that that bill was genuine."

"Perhaps the men who stole your five thousand dollars have taken this means to repay you," Brent suggested to Smith.

"I wish I thought so," said Smith. "But that wouldn't account for the threat I received this afternoon; I mean yesterday afternoon."

"What was that?"

"It was this," Mildred said as she took an envelope from the handbag she was carrying and handed it to Brent.

It had been opened at the end. Brent took from it a one-hundred-dollar bill, a small unaddressed envelope with a two-cent stamp on it, and a typewritten slip. The slip read:

"You didn't mail the fifty dollars in the chute at the Knickerbocker Building at the time requested. You were warned that failure would mean your death, but you will be given a chance to save your life. You must return all the money that you have been given. Deposit the money in large bills in the mail-box at the corner of Bowdoin and Susquehanna streets before daylight to-morrow morning. If you fail you will die before noon."

"The letters are mysterious," Brent admitted, "but as for the threats—well, any one would have a hard time killing you if you remain here."

The detective studied the hundred-dollar bill carefully. So far as he could tell, and he was more than usually expert in detecting spurious bills, there was absolutely nothing the matter with it.

Suddenly Mildred uttered a faint scream.

"Look!" she gasped.

Oscar Smith had been sitting near a window. On the floor in front of him, apparently thrown through the window, was another sealed but unaddressed envelope!

CHAPTER THREE

BUT how was it possible for an envelope to have been thrown through the window from the outside when that window was ten stories above the street?

Brent picked up the envelope and opened it. It had the usual inclosures: A hundred-dollar bill, a stamped envelope that contained no address, and a typed slip that contained these startling words:

"Don't think any detective can save your life if you disobey my instructions. Unless the five thousand dollars I have loaned you during the past two weeks, the fifty-dollar bill I failed to get because you neglected to mail it at the Knickerbocker Building at the proper time, and the last two fifty-dollar bills due me from this and the preceding remittance, a total of five thousand one hundred and fifty dollars, are deposited in the mail-box at the corner of Bowdoin and Susquehanna streets before daylight, you will die! I repeat it; you will die—before noon!"

Brent read the note, and then reread it more carefully. He passed it over to Mildred when she insisted, and while she and Smith pored over it the detective inspected the ninety-ninth and one-hundredth hundred-dollar bills with the aid of a magnifying-glass. He could not find a single flaw.

And yet it seemed incredible that any one would be willing to exchange a genuine hundred-dollar banknote for half that sum.

Of course, there was the possibility, as Mildred had suggested, that the remittances had come from some crazed philanthropist.

But Brent had a hunch that there was a reason, and that there was a solution to the

mystery that would seem simple, once it was understood.

And then there was the dying boast of the famous counterfeiter, old Doc Callaway.

Brent again inspected the bills. He started to say something to Smith, but decided to keep what he had intended to say to himself.

If the hundred-dollar bills were not genuine, might it not be possible that Smith was a confederate of the counterfeiters?

But if he was, why had he come to a detective? Why had he said anything even to Mildred? And what possible object could he have in going through all the strange rigamarole of paying a hundred dollars to himself and then putting half of the amount in a mail-box in an unaddressed envelope?

How could the donor of the hundred-dollar bills be sure of getting back fifty dollars from each one when the returns were mailed in envelopes that contained no addresses.

Brent knew that there had been no mail-box robberies during the past two weeks.

It was possible that the envelopes were addressed with invisible ink that came out in the darkness of the mail-boxes.

But if this was the solution, why did the invisible ink not appear before? There was no more darkness in the mail-boxes than in the larger envelopes in which the smaller ones were delivered.

Brent made a quick test, but could find no traces of any invisible ink on the two envelopes.

"Oh, I forgot to tell you," Mildred said. "The letter-carrier who collects mail from the Knickerbocker Building boards at our place. I heard him talking at dinner yesterday about the careless way in which some people address letters. He said that he had found an unaddressed letter in the mail, and when it was opened at the post-office it contained nothing but a fifty-dollar note wrapped in a piece of newspaper."

"You think it was the same fifty dollars you mailed at the Knickerbocker Building?"

"I know it was, for I wrapped it in a piece of newspaper. I was detained on the subway nearly an hour beyond the time I should have mailed it.

"And another thing: I asked the letter-carrier if much money was found in unaddressed envelopes. Of course I did not let him know how interested I was in his reply."

"What was his reply?"

"That this was the first unaddressed envelope that had been found in several weeks."

Brent had concluded his tests. So far as he could find, no invisible ink had been used on the two envelopes.

"Do you wish to return the money?" Brent asked Smith.

"I wish I could," was the reply, "but I have invested it."

"If it will ease your mind any," Brent offered, "I shall be glad to furnish the money to deposit, though I am certain you will not be killed if you fail to do it. I'll hold on to these hundreds for a time."

Mildred's face lighted up at the offer, but Brent was sure that he caught an avaricious gleam in Oscar Smith's eyes.

"Oh, Brent," said Mildred, "that will be splendid of you. But can you spare that much? It may be a long time before we—before Oscar can repay you."

"It won't be necessary for you to repay me."

"But—but—— Oh, you are the noblest man in the world, Brent, but it is asking too much of you to have you land that amount."

"I won't lose it."

"How can you be so sure that you won't lose it?" asked Smith. "You don't know that I am honest. Apparently all the money I have returned has reached the right person, with the single exception of the money that Mildred mailed too late."

"I can't tell you what I shall do to prevent its loss, but I am certain it will not be lost. I only hope it reaches the person who wrote those two letters."

"I am hardly in a position to reject your magnanimous offer, Mr. Garland," said Smith. "I am sure that I will be killed by noon to-day if the money is not deposited before daylight. I am equally certain that

you will never get the money back until my investments enable me to repay you."

Was there a boast in the last words?

The detective could not be sure.

Brent knew that his feeling toward the man who was engaged to marry Mildred Grant was too bitter for him to judge whether Smith was innocent or a clever crook. The only thing was to wait and see. Meanwhile he would watch Smith's every action and expression.

"It will take half an hour for me to get the money," Brent stated. "These envelopes are letter-size, and it will be necessary to use large bills, so it won't bulk up too much."

"Can you get bills of large denominations at this hour of the night?" Smith asked.

Brent Garland had never boasted before, but there was a purpose in the phrase he used in his reply.

"An American detective can accomplish anything," he declared.

The detective went into the adjoining room, where, in a concealed closet, he had a private telephone. There was not much danger of being overheard, but if any one had been listening he would not have understood the words Brent spoke.

That they were understood, however, by the man to whom Brent was telephoning was apparent a half-hour later, when a light tap sounded on the door of Brent's sitting-room.

When Brent opened the door two policemen were standing on the outside. One of them handed the detective an envelope.

"Thanks for your trouble, boys."

"Good-night, Mr. Garland."

"Good-night, Clancy. Good-night, Pat."

Brent opened the envelope in the presence of Mildred and Smith. It contained five one-thousand, one one-hundred, and one fifty-dollar bills, all crisp and fresh from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing of the Treasury Department!

CHAPTER FOUR

"ONE two-cent stamp will carry these seven bills to the farthermost post-office in Uncle Sam's big republic," Brent joked. "Therefore I shall put the entire amount in one of these envelopes and keep the other!"

"What good will that envelope do you?" asked Smith. "There is absolutely nothing on it but a two-cent stamp. Don't you think it would be safer to divide the amount and use both envelopes?"

Smith's question was enough to make the detective put the envelope in his pocket.

"It is now nearly four o'clock," said Brent. "The corner of Susquehanna and Bowdoin streets is in a suburb, several miles from here. When I telephoned for this money I also telephoned the garage to have my car outside. I think I'll deposit this envelope in the mail-box myself."

Again Smith offered an objection.

"Oh, I think you'd better let me do that, Mr. Garland," he said. "I have no fear of anything happening to me if the money is mailed, but something might happen to you, a stranger."

"I'll run the risk," said Brent.

"Brent's car is large enough for all of us," said Mildred. "Suppose we all go."

To this Brent agreed, and Smith offered no objection.

Brent's car was a closed coupé. The single seat was wide enough for three. Brent dismissed the driver and took the wheel himself, and in a few minutes was making road speed through the silent streets.

Brent had often ridden in this car with Mildred, but never under such thrilling circumstances as to-night. There was one thing that made the long ride enjoyable to him.

It was possible for three passengers to occupy the unusually wide seat of the coupé and barely touch each other; but throughout the whole ride Mildred pressed closely against Brent, so closely indeed that he knew she could not be touching the other man at all.

Brent knew that in her excited state Mildred did not realize that she was leaning on him, but the contact thrilled him just the same. There was a tremendous satisfaction in knowing that her unconscious, instinctive clinging, as it were, was to him and not to Oscar Smith.

Because of the pleasant proximity Brent could feel the little tremors that ran through Mildred's body from time to time, and they told him that she was still quite worried. He was not sorry that he had let her come along, however, because he knew she would have been still more worried had she remained at home.

The ride lasted about a half-hour. Brent pulled his car over to the curb, turned off the ignition, and said:

"The mail-box is three or four squares from here. I'll leave you here until I mail this envelope."

"Do you think any one is watching the box?"

"I don't know."

The four squares that came together at the intersection of Bowdoin and Susquehanna streets were about the best in this residential suburb. There were only a few houses on each, and these were large, handsome ones, with lawns in front and spacious grounds all around.

Brent proceeded cautiously on his way to the mail-box. He was on the alert, but could detect the presence of no one. He reached the mail-box without seeing any one. If there were any persons watching the mail-box they were either hidden behind the shrubbery or in one of the unlighted residences.

Brent pulled open the slot at the top of the mail-box and let the unaddressed envelope that contained fifty-one hundred and fifty dollars of good Treasury notes fall into the box.

That sum was now entrusted to the care of Uncle Sam's postal employees.

Brent had made careful plans to prevent it falling into the hands of the mysterious man or men who, if Oscar Smith's remarkable story was true, had already secured forty-eight hundred and fifty dollars.

Certainly some one had gotten possession of the money that Mildred had mailed.

The more Brent thought about the mystery the more he was convinced that a part, at least, of the strange story that Smith had told him and Mildred was true.

But if Smith was the crook that Brent suspected (and, we might as well admit, hoped) that he was, why had he said anything about the mysterious remittances or gifts? Why had he not kept silent?

No matter from what angle Brent considered it, the case was one of baffling mystery.

CHAPTER FIVE

WHEN the detective returned to the car Mildred was standing alone on the sidewalk near it.

"Where is Smith?" Brent asked.

"Didn't you see him? He followed so that he could help you if you were attacked."

This action of Smith's removed Brent's last doubt that he was a crook. The certainty he felt as to this improved the detective's spirits several hundred per cent.

"He probably took the wrong turn," Brent explained to Mildred. "If he doesn't return within five minutes we'll look for him. Meantime I think you ought to tell me something more about the man you are going to marry."

"Yes, I owe it to you to tell you about him," Mildred agreed. "My family and Oscar's were next-door neighbors in a small town in Ohio. As I have told you before, my family consisted of my mother, my brother Frank, and myself. Oscar had only a father, an old German chemist. The name was originally Schmidt, but Oscar was such an ardent patriot during the war he changed it to Smith when his father died."

"How long have you been engaged to him?"

"Always, it seems. The boys did not like Oscar when he was younger, but mother did, and so did I. Even his father disliked him, but I never knew why."

Brent could understand.

"Probably one reason for his father's dislike," Mildred explained, "was because Oscar was such a patriotic member of the National Guard and so anxious for this country to get into the war. But the old man

died before Oscar and my brother sailed for Europe."

"Did your brother like him?"

"N-o-o. He didn't want me to be engaged to Oscar. But they became better friends during the war. Oscar and Frank were captured a few weeks after they reached the front. They were put to work in the coal mines and suffered terribly until it was discovered that Oscar knew something about chemistry."

"He is a chemist, is he?"

"His father taught him a little about it, Oscar says. When the Germans found this out they gave him lighter work, and of course the first thing he did was to try to help Frank."

"He told you this?"

"Yes, and Frank wrote me. Frank's guard was so brutal that Oscar appealed to a friendly officer and had him punished. But it was too late; Frank died in prison."

Mildred was affected when she thought about her brother's suffering. Brent waited a few moments and then asked:

"Did you hear from your brother while he was in prison?"

"No, but when Oscar returned he brought me several letters that Frank had written before he died."

"Did Smith return immediately after the Armistice?"

"No; he has only been back a few months. It seems that his father had some property in Germany, and Oscar wanted to recover it if possible. But when it was found that he was an American and had fought against Germany it was confiscated."

"Has he any explanation of these mysterious hundred-dollar gifts other than what you have already told me?"

"I don't know if I ought to tell you, Brent. Oscar made me promise not to."

"If you want me to clear up this mystery I should know everything it is possible to know."

"I don't know if it has any relation to the mystery or not, but it seems that the man who now owns the property Oscar tried to get has threatened Oscar's life several times. Oscar says that he has become one of the wealthiest men in the world since the war, a regular master of millions. Oscar says that he has never failed in doing whatever he set out to do. I believe that he gave this money to Oscar and then demanded it back again, just to torture him."

"Is this man in the United States?"

"We don't know, but we fear so. Oscar is certain that he is, and says that he is even more powerful here where there is so much money than he was in Germany.

"When I got home from the theatre tonight and saw Oscar waiting for me, I knew that something had happened. That was why I ran away from you.

"He had just received the first letter threatening his life. There is a steamer sailing for Hamburg at noon to-morrow. Oscar begged me to marry him at once, so that we could take this steamer. For some strange reason which I do not understand, he says he will be better able to cope with this man in Germany.

"I refused. When mother died she begged me to wait a year before I married Oscar, and I promised that I would.

"I have often told Oscar what a wonderful detective you are and what baffling mysteries you could solve. He did not want me to appeal to you, but I declared that I would, whether he was willing or not. Then he agreed to accompany me to your apartment if I would promise not to tell you about this strange master of millions.

"I did not tell you then, but now I have broken my promise. I feel that I am justified in breaking it, for Oscar risked his life many times to befriend my poor brother, and I am willing to do everything I can to help him."

Brent took Mildred's hands in his.

"Listen, Mildred," he said. "I don't believe you love Oscar Smith at all."

"Yes, I do," she protested. "Why, of course I do. Think of all he did for Frank. Why, I have always liked—loved Oscar. Even when he was a poor, friendless young boy."

"No, you don't. Boys didn't like him. Your brother didn't like him. His own father didn't like him. Even your mother must have doubted him before she died.

You have mistaken the sympathy you felt for his friendlessness for love."

"Oh, no; I am sure you are mistaken."

"I don't believe your brother ever came to like him, but I'll find out about that before I am through with this case. Oscar Smith is the kind of man that no man likes. I hated him the moment I caught a glimpse of him last night."

"Hated Oscar? Why, you had never seen him before."

"Yes, hated him. I'll admit that my hatred was mostly due to jealousy, but it was so intense that I wanted to kill him."

Mildred slowly shook her head.

"No, Brent," she protested. "You may have been jealous, but you could not have killed him."

"Maybe not, but it is a good thing for him and for me that I didn't run across him while I was walking off my jealous fit!"

Mildred gazed around.

"Hadn't we better look for Oscar? Surely he has had time to reach that mail-box and return?"

"We'll look for him if you say so, but I don't think he is going to return."

"Isn't going to return? Why, of course he is!"

"Mildred, I haven't your faith in Oscar Smith. I am a good judge of men, and I believe he is a crook. If he is, he is a clever one, and probably clever enough to know that I have his number."

"Oh, I am sure you are wrong, Brent. Please let's find him."

They got into the coupé. The engine was a splendid power plant and started, and Brent drove slowly, almost noiselessly, around the corner.

He took the turning he thought Smith had taken, and therefore approached the mail-box from a direction opposite the one he had first taken. He pointed out the box to Mildred.

"The first collection of mail is taken up at seven o'clock," he said. "I have men in that building watching every person who approaches the box. They have rifles, and if there is any attempt to rob the box they will shoot to kill."

"How will you get your money back?"

"When the postman collects the mail my men will accompany him to the post-office, where the postmaster will allow them to inspect the mail and reclaim the unaddressed envelope. Simple, isn't it?"

While he was speaking the car had crossed the lighted intersection of Bowdoin and Susquehanna streets and was proceeding along Susquehanna. There were three corners to turn before they reached the spot where the car had been parked. Brent was just swinging the car around the first of them when Mildred uttered a startled cry.

But Brent had alreadys seen a man's body stretched across the sidewalk that had attracted her attention. He brought the car to a standstill, leaped out, and walked toward it.

It was the body of Oscar Smith!

And plunged into that body was a knife or dagger, the ivory handle of which shone spectrally against the dark coat that it pierced!

Brent would have spared Mildred the shock, but before he could prevent it she was out of the car, bending over the prostrate form.

"It is Oscar," she gasped. "He has been murdered!"

Then she recognized the handle of the knife. It was a handle of striking design. It was the handle of a knife that Brent usually kept in the tool-box of his car.

Mildred had seen it on one of her rides with Brent when he had used it to clip some wildflowers for her.

She turned toward Brent, a look of increasing horror in her eyes.

"Oh, Brent, how could you?" she moaned. "Surely you don't think——"

"It is your knife! You have just told me you wanted to kill him, and you have done it!"

CHAPTER SIX

THE shock was more than Mildred could stand. She fainted away in the arms of the man she had just accused of murder.

Brent placed her carefully on the seat of his coupé and sounded a faint signal.

He knew that it would be several minutes before Mildred recovered from her swoon. He wanted to get her away from the scene of the tragedy, but before he took her away it was necessary to give certain instructions to the men he had stationed in the neighborhood.

The two policemen who had brought him the money a brief hour earlier appeared in answer to his signal, coming apparently out of the very shadows.

Clancy examined the body.

"Seems to be dead, all right," he announced.

"You recognize him, Clancy?"

"Sure. He's the crook who was in your apartment a while back."

"Yes. And that's my knife sticking in him."

"You don't mean——"

"No. I keep that knife in my car. He got hold of it in some way and followed me. Perhaps he intended to use it on me, but some one used it on him instead. Have you seen any one around?"

"Only one man. After you mailed your letter a man came a few minutes later and mailed another letter. Hogan had a bead on him, but he didn't make any attempt to get anything out of the box—just dropped his letter in."

"Is this the man?"

"'Twas about his build. I believe it was him."

"I am certain of it," Brent stated. "Well, when he reached these shadows where he was out of your sight some one got him. You and Pat take charge of the body. I'll take Miss Grant to some friends of mine who live near here."

"Any further instructions, sir?"

"Yes. You remain here. Pat, you look up Hogan and Jackson and caution them to watch that mail-box closely until the first collection is made. Then return here and find out what you can about this nearest house. I'll telephone for a wagon."

Brent took Mildred to the home of a doctor friend a short ride away. The physician at once administered restoratives, but Mildred was slow to respond.

"Her heart appears to be weak," the doctor stated, "and I shall have to be careful. It may be hours before she recovers. She must have had a severe shock."

"She has," Brent replied; "a series of shocks."

Brent would not leave her. He sat by the bedside and took one of her hands in his.

After all, it was not necessary for him to return to the spot where he had left the policemen on guard. They knew what to do with the body of Oscar Smith, and the two men who were watching the mail-box would accompany the collector to the post-office and recover the unaddressed envelope, arrangement to this effect having been made with the postmaster.

It was ten o'clock before Mildred gave signs of recovering. The first sign was when her fingers tightened on Brent's.

At last she opened her eyes, and in them, as she gazed at Brent, was not the look of horror that had filled them when she accused him of killing the man to whom she was engaged, but a milder expression of bewilderment.

"I didn't kill him, dear," Brent whispered.

"I know it now," she answered him. "Of course you didn't. You couldn't. But who did?"

"That I don't know. But I'll soon find out."

Mildred promised Brent that she would remain at the home of the physician until he called for her. The wife of the physician promised to take good care of her.

At headquarters Brent inquired about Clancy and Pat.

"They haven't shown up," he was informed.

"Have they telephoned?"

"Not a word. Precinct out there got your telephone message to send a wagon to get a dead man they were supposed to be guarding on Susquehanna street, but when it got there there was no dead man or live one, either!"

"And neither Clancy nor Pat have made a report?"

"Haven't seen them or heard from them since you telephoned for them about two o'clock this morning!"

CHAPTER SEVEN

HERE was still another mystery!

After putting the proper machinery into action to find out what had become of the two policemen and the dead man he had left them guarding, Brent returned to his apartment.

It was nearly noon when he got there. Old Isom, after pausing only long enough to administer a scolding because his master had not slept the night before and had gone without breakfast, soon prepared an appetizing meal for him.

"P'liceman named Hogan telephoned and said he gwine be here durreckly," the old darky informed the detective.

Hogan was one of the policemen who had watched the mail-box.

On his way to his apartment Brent had procured a couple of hundred-dollar bills of the same series as those he had obtained from Oscar Smith. While he was eating the breakfast that Isom set before him he carefully compared the four bills.

He had made one discovery when he first examined the bills that convinced him that they were counterfeits, but he had kept this discovery to himself.

The two bills were exact duplicates of each other, *even to the numbers!*

In other words, this fact, this duplication of the number proved that the bills were not genuine; that is, unless the machine that numbered the bills had failed to turn!

So far as Brent could see there was not a particle of difference in the four bills, with the exception of the numbers.

If the two that Brent had obtained from Smith were counterfeits they were so perfect that it would be impossible to detect them.

While he was examining them a messenger delivered another special-delivery letter from his friend in the Secret Service in Washington.

"Doc Callaway was right," a portion of this letter read. "Reports from the big cities indicate that the country is being flooded with hundred-dollar notes that the bank clerks are unable to detect. It is probable that several million dollars' worth have been put into circulation. Help us out, old man. Our entire force is working on it, and our best man has been in your city since his return from Europe a few weeks ago. He will probably get in touch with you about eight to-night."

Brent studied all the facts given in the letter. It was quite evident that he had already stumbled onto the case, and he hoped that the steps he had taken to safeguard the envelope and money he had dropped into the mail-box that morning would yield some clue that would enable him to find out who had been passing the spurious bills.

This hope was dissipated a few minutes later, however, when Hogan reported.

"Did you recover the envelope?" Brent inquired.

"No, sir. We couldn't tell which one it was."

"Couldn't tell which it was? Why, man, it had no address on it."

"There wasn't any letter in that box that didn't have an address on it," Hogan declared.

"But there must have been. I dropped it into that box myself."

"Me and Jackson saw you do it," confirmed Hogan, "and nobody took it out. Nobody went near that box after you left except one young fellow that came from the other direction. But he didn't take any letter out; he dropped one in."

"Did you watch the postman when he collected the mail?"

"Me and Jackson was right there with him, and he didn't get a chance to palm it, either. We saw every letter that was in the box, and both me and Jackson and the postman, all of us, felt around in the box to see that there wasn't any letters left sticking to the sides."

"Of course you followed the collector to the post-office?"

"Yes, sir, and searched him when we got there. The postmaster himself told us to do it. There was only about fifteen letters in the box, and they was all addressed."

"Did you ask the postmaster to hold them for me?"

"We asked him, but he said he had no authority to delay the mails. But he let me take a list of the people the letters were addressed to."

Brent commended this foresight of the policemen, which would enable him to investigate all of the addresses.

He soon found that this would not be necessary, however, for two of the letters bore the same address:

"Mr. Frederick Carlson,
968 Susquehanna Street."

On Brent's desk he kept a number of directories, street, city, and telephone. The street directory showed him that No. 968 Susquehanna street was between Bowdoin and Harrison streets.

Brent had an idea that the number of the house in front of which Oscar Smith had been stabbed would be found to be "968."

He also consulted several city and telephone directories of different years. The name of Frederick Carlson appeared in each. It was evident that he was a permanent resident.

But Brent decided that he would make a few investigations about Mr. Carlson. During the next two hours he learned that he was a very estimable old gentleman of about sixty-five who lived with his wife and servants in the same house he had occupied all his life.

Detectives and policemen searched all day for the two policemen who had disappeared while guarding a dead body, but without finding any trace of them.

It was nearly five o'clock in the afternoon before Brent was able to return to the place where he had left Mildred Grant.

Before he saw Mildred he took accasion to make an inquiry of the physician about Frederick Carlson.

"Old Mr. Carlson is a patient of mine, Brent," the doctor told him. "Don't try to figure him out a crook, because he is the very opposite. He is one of the finest old men that ever lived."

"I wonder if he would allow me to go through his house?"

"I am sure he would if he were here. But I sent him to California two months ago, and commanded him to stay there six months."

"Are his servants at home?"

"No, he took them with him and left the place in charge of a caretaker."

Mildred had recovered so much that she was dressed and was in the sitting-room, where Brent joined her. The doctor's wife left them together.

"I think I should tell you, Mildred," said Brent, "that I believe Oscar Smith is still alive. I didn't examine him myself, but he was probably unconscious."

He explained to her that Smith and the two policemen had all disappeared.

"Brent," Mildred said slowly, "I have been thinking about Oscar all day, and I believe you were right. I don't believe I loved him—that I ever loved him."

"I am sure you never did," Brent agreed.

"The horror that I felt when I believed him dead was not so much at the thought that he was dead as it was at the thought that it must have been you who killed him."

"Don't think about it any more, dear," Brent said. "I'll find him and clear up all this mystery in a few days."

"I hope Oscar is alive," Mildred continued, "but I know now that I shall never marry him."

"I know it, too," declared Brent.

And with that he gathered her into his arms.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE letter from Washington led Brent to expect a call from one of the Secret Service men about eight o'clock that night.

Leaving Mildred to spend the night at the doctor's home, Brent returned to his apartment.

But after waiting until ten o'clock without any word from the Secret Service agent, Brent decided to waste no more time in making a thorough investigation of No. 968 Susquehanna street. He had had men investigating that neighborhood all day, without result, but he believed he would be able to learn something if he made a personal examination.

He believed that he would find not only some clue that would help him in solving the mystery of the counterfeit bills, but that he would also find a clue as to the whereabouts of the three men who had vanished that morning.

What had happened to the two policemen can be synopsized in a very few words. While their backs were turned the supposedly dead man had regained consciousness. He was silently stealing away through the grounds when the men who had been left to watch his body heard a mocking laugh at some distance behind them.

Clancy admitted later that when he heard the dead man laugh his hair stood on end. Pat made the sign of the cross before he turned around.

When they did turn they saw Oscar Smith, very much alive, standing near the outbuildings that belonged to No. 968. Smith mockingly waved his hand toward the policemen before he disappeared from view.

The policemen had been told to take charge of a dead body, and they decided that it was up to them to keep charge of that body whether it was alive or dead. They dashed across the grounds in pursuit.

They paused a moment to decide in which building the man had taken refuge. As they did the curtain at an upper window of what was now a garage, but had once been a pretentious two-story barn and stable, was raised a moment and then quickly lowered. Some one had probably looked out to investigate the condition of the weather.

But during the brief moment that the window was lighted up the policemen saw men bending over what appeared to be a table. Pat had once been a printer's devil, and he thought the men were working at a small printing-press.

The policemen had no difficulty in getting into the lower part of the garage, for Smith purposely left the door open for them. But as soon as they were in they lost all interest in what was happening or might happen.

The whole side of the building seemed to fall in and hit them on the back of their heads. The next glimmer of understanding they had was when they regained consciousness and found that they were not only bound hand and foot, but gagged as well.

Brent Garland had an equally mortifying experience some eighteen hours later.

Approaching the garage from the rear, something dark and smothering fell over his head, and before he could voice an outcry or signal to his assistants, who were in the neighborhood, he was rendered unconscious by the asphyxiating fumes of some kind of gas.

When the effect of these fumes wore away Brent also was a prisoner, bound and gagged.

He was on the floor, propped against the wall of a room in which three men, one of them Oscar Smith, were packing small boxes full of currency.

Clancy and Pat, the two policemen, bound and gagged still, were on the floor near Brent.

Oscar Smith soon noticed that Brent was conscious. He strode toward the detective, his hands full of bills, and waved them gloatingly in his face.

"So you are the smart detective Mildred boasted could solve any mystery? You are the expert who could detect any counterfeit? Bah! You are a fool! It is laughable!"

Brent strained at his bonds, but they had been fastened too securely.

"Strain if you like," Smith jeered at him. "When those cords are unfastened you will be too dead to know anything about it!"

Smith's confederates paid no attention to what was going on but proceeded steadily with their packing.

"I am a kind-hearted man," continued Smith, "in spite of the fact that I am going to kill you and these other two men in five minutes. And it's because I have such a kind heart that I am going to relieve your curiosity. This is the money you mailed this morning. You, with all your cleverness that impressed Mildred so much, could never guess how I got the money out of the mail-box, but my kind heart forces me to show you."

He tossed the money that he was holding to the two workmen and took two envelopes from different cabinets.

"You tested the envelopes last night to see if they had been written on with invisible ink. Such a test! Bah! You didn't know that my father was the greatest chemist that ever lived and that he taught me everything he knew."

He held one of the envelopes in front of Brent and the other at arm's-length.

"Separated by ten inches, these envelopes would stay blank until doom's-day," explained the crook. "But mail them in the same box, bring them within six inches of each other and see what happens!"

He brought the two envelopes slowly together in front of Brent. Almost instantly the same address stood out on each:

"Mr. Frederick Carlson,
968 Susquehanna Street."

"That's the way I got good money for bad. Thousands of men all over the United States are to-day sending me good money for bad. I shall be rich—the richest man on earth. I shall be a master of millions! I shall buy a palace on the Rhine for Mildred!

"You wonder why I sent the money to myself and then allowed Mildred to ask you to protect me."

He laughed.

"That's a joke. Protect me from myself! But the main joke is on you. I'll tell you:

"Mildred said you were such a brainy detective. She made me mad, telling me that so often. I knew she loved you, but she didn't know it herself, and I'll never let her find it out. When we are married I'll tell her what a fool you were and how much more brains I have than you ever dreamed of having.

"That's why I used myself just as I have used a thousand other men. I was planning a mystery that you could not solve. I wrote myself those threatening letters. I told Mildred a cock-and-bull story about some terrible monster in Germany who was threatening my life. I knew she would enlist your aid and tell you the whole story, and that's just what I wanted her to do. Little did either of you suspect that I, myself, was the man! Won't you appear ridiculous in her eyes when she finds out what a fool you are compared to myself?

"You would have kept her from marrying me if you could, but I was too smart for you. I didn't intend to lose her again. I almost lost her once. That fool brother of hers interfered. But I paid him back. I wish I had time to tell you just what I did to him."

He stopped short. The envelopes he had been using in his fierce, crazy-like gesticulations fell from his shaking fingers. His eyes stared as though he were seeing a ghost!

He was—for the second time within twenty-four hours!

The next instant he tottered and fell heavily to the floor.

The sound of the falling body attracted the attention of the two men, who, their backs turned, had kept on packing money during the lunatic's harangue. But as they turned——

"Hands up!"

Brent twisted his head enough to see a man standing in the doorway, a leveled revolver in his hand.

"I am Frank Grant," the man stated, "one of Uncle Sam's Secret Service Agents and the brother of the girl this scoundrel has been trying to marry! Just as soon as I can slip the bracelets on this pair of crooks I'll release you!"

CHAPTER NINE

MILDRED and her brother were soon reunited. And then, of course, there were explanations.

"Oscar Smith was a spy," Frank explained to Mildred and Brent. "I found it out almost as soon as we reached the front. He deserted and offered his services to Germany as a chemist.

"He was responsible for my capture—and for all the suffering I endured while I was a prisoner. He thought I died in prison, but I escaped and joined the Secret Service. Of course he forged the letters Mildred thought were from me.

"When I became a Secret Service man I heard of a photographic counterfeiting process, and have been investigating it ever since I got back to the United States.

"One of Smith's confederates was a man named Callaway, an escaped counterfeiter. One of our men ran across him and shot him when he resisted arrest. Callaway gave us a clue that I have been following.

"The process is simple, but the chemicals used can only be compounded by expert chemists. A banknote is placed on top of a stack of prepared sheets, and the rays of light generated by these chemicals passed through the note and the paper. The result is that the exact imprint of the bill is left on every sheet.

"But a banknote is printed on two sides," said Mildred. "Why does not each side show?"

"The note is split," Frank explained, "and only one side used at a time. A banknote is a thin thing to split, but it can be done. There is no degree of thinness or anything else that cannot be divided into two parts.

"There was only one flaw in these counterfeits—the numbers. But as each bill was changed in a different bank, the numbers were not noted in time to detect the counterfeit."

"I think you should have informed me that you were not dead, Frank," said Mildred.

"If I had Oscar Smith would have learned of it. I was not ready to have him know it until I was ready to arrest him.

"I located his headquarters only yesterday. He saw me this morning by accident and thought I was a ghost. He was very superstitious. Most cranks and crazy men are.

"I knew he was not dead, and kept out of his sight until to-night. I had no idea the shock of seeing me the second time would kill him, but it did."

"Of course there was a loose screw in his mentality," observed Brent.

"Yes. He had a most exaggerated ego. He considered himself the brainiest person on earth. That's why he resented Mildred's praise of your ability and concocted a scheme to make her think he had more brains than you."

"He was a fiend," Mildred declared, shuddering. "Oh, Brent, suppose you had let me marry him!"

POOR PLACE TO HIDE GEMS

THE theft of $400 worth of jewelry contained in a bag hidden away in a piano for safe keeping by Mrs. Louis Bernyk, of No. 1443 Washington avenue, the Bronx, led to the arrest of Daniel Becker, twenty-one, of No. 411 East One Hundred and Seventy-eighth street, a piano tuner, on a charge of grand larceny.

Detective William Stetter took Becker to the Bathgate avenue station, where, according to the detective, he admitted the robbery. The jewelry was alleged to have been subsequently recovered in his home.

On September 25, according to the police, Becker went to Mrs. Bernyk's home to tune her piano. He spent about half an hour tuning the instrument and then bundled up his tools and left. A few moments later Mrs. Bernyk thought of her jewels and ran to the piano. She found they had disappeared, and reported the robbery to the police of the Bathgate avenue station.

"Too Many Bones"

by Edgar Daniel Kramer

AS if by magic Weston had suddenly lifted from the lethargy of the early May afternoon and became a buzz of excitement that bubbled away along Main street, down Main Court, Liberty and Green streets, and thence out into the byways. All business was suspended for the time being as little groups formed here and there on the corners and in the stores to gesticulate wildly and conjecture as to what had come to pass. Clem Wilmer, breathless, red-faced, pouring sweat, had rushed in on Lem Stevens as he dozed over his telegraph key and roughly roused him from his nap.

"Git this off, Lem!" Clem had gasped. "Castle says git it through right away so's Pumphrey'll git th' three-fifteen."

Old man Mears, resting and getting his second wind on the bench under the telegraph office window as he meandered to the post-office, had overheard. He got to his feet, momentarily forgetful of his rheumatism, and hobbled on his way, spreading the news as he went.

"Chief Castle's telegraphin' to th' city," he piped, "telegraphin' to Pumphrey, th' detecative. Somethin's wrong 'round yar, folks, I'm a-tellin' you all."

In no time at all, it seemed, Lem Stevens, leaning lazily from the window of his little office, was being bombarded with questions.

"Clem Wilmer send off a telegram, Lem?"

"Yep."

"Fer Chief Castle?"

"Yep," Lem answered laconically, shifting his tobacco from one cheek to the other as he spoke.

"To Pumphrey in th' city?"

"Yep."

"Pumphrey comin' on th' three-fifteen?"

"Suppose so."

"What's th' trouble, Lem?"

"Search me."

"Where's Castle?"

"Clem says he's out to ol' Ebenezer Holtzapple's."

They waited for no more. Those whom duty called reluctantly returned to their tasks. The idle and the curious stampeded away out Main street and along the crazily twisting and rutted road that led to Ebenezer's tumble-down shack on the slope of a hill, a mile to the north of Weston.

Ebenezer Holtzapple was a withered, gray wisp of a man with kindly, twinkling blue eyes, who had the reputation of being the richest, as well as the shrewdest, cattle dealer in three counties. He had no faith

in banks, and the whereabouts of his hoardings was the subject of many a winter night's discussion. None knew the value of a dollar better than he, and yet, though he appeared miserly when it came to his own needs, no charity ever appealed to him in vain. "Ol' Eb'll help" had developed into a Weston slogan. When approached he would laugh in a peculiarly high-pitched cackle and more than do his part. Furthermore, he never let his left hand know what his right was doing. Weston folks, white and black, had a habit of going to him with their troubles. No one ever left his humble door hungry. Children and animals, too, loved the strange old fellow, which, of a truth, is praise from Cæsar. Many were the tales of his eccentricities, his kindness, his wealth, that regaled the ears of the occasional stranger.

In front of the old man's shack was a sloping field, where wild mustard, wild carrots, brown-eyed Susans, daisies and goldenrod grew in rich profusion according to the season. Behind the house was an old garden, surrounded by a broken-down paling fence that was held together by the tangled tendrils of honeysuckle vines. Beyond the garden a wood, interspersed with the dead trunks of blighted chestnut trees, covered the hill and the far side that fell gradually away to an abrupt cliff about halfway down the incline.

When the curious crowd swarmed toward the shack they found the rude shutters barred and Chief Castle standing with his back against the door and a revolver in his hand.

"Stand back!" is all he would growl in reply to their many queries.

About two hours previous, a little before noon in fact, as the habitual crowd of loafers were taking their usual ease and drowsing in the chairs that lined the sun-splashed sidewalk in front of the Weston House, Clem Wilmer broke in explosively upon their meditations.

"Drat it!" he exclaimed. "I knowed thar's been somethin' wrong all th' dinged mornin'. I ain't seen ol' Eb Holtzapple drivin' past. Anybody seen him?"

Startled by this unusual circumstance, they all jerked upright, ceased chewing for a brief interval and stared questioningly at each other. Just then Police Chief Castle heaved his huge bulk around the nearest corner.

"Ain't seen ol' Ebenezer this mornin', hev you, chief?" Clem paused in the act of taking a bite of plug-cut so as to constitute himself spokesman for the group.

"Nope!" Castle grunted.

"Nobody's seen him to-day," Clem explained.

"Thet's funny," Castle answered.

"Sure be," Clem agreed, biting off a mouth-filling portion of tobacco. "Ain't like him at all. Fer years now he's drove past yar every mornin', rain er shine. Fer years——"

"Mebbe thar's somethin' wrong with th' ol' feller," Castle interrupted. "Sick er somethin'. I reckin I'd better be investigatin' around some. We ain't a-wantin' any untoward fool accident to be a-happenin' to ol' Eb."

He moved away ponderously. As one man the hotel loungers rose, yawned, stretched and followed him, sensing a thrill of excitement. A slow and silent procession they moved from under the protecting shade of the maples, oaks and horse-chestnuts that lined the street out into the glaring sunshine and started the rough climb upward. The sun blazed down upon them, and Castle found the going especially difficult.

"Duty be duty," he grumbled, as he lagged and mopped the sweat from his face with a huge bandanna. "Duty be duty, but I never dreamed this dinged hill was so allfired steep. Why couldn't ol' Eb hev taken his usual drive an' saved me all this ploddin'?"

Puffing and blowing and wheezing, they drew nigh to the shack. The place was dead. Castle pounded heavily upon the door with his huge fist, and it sprang open under the impact. With faces white and eyes wide, the little group crowded close and peered through the doorway.

"None o' you come further 'n th' door!" Castle ordered, as he tiptoed in. "An' keep yer gabs shut tight. I ain't wantin' this

talked about jus' yet, an' I ain't wantin' anything disturbed."

In the dim light that filtered through the small, dirty windows Ebenezer Holtzapple lay sprawled upon his back on the littered floor, his arms flung out as on a crucifix. He was lying in a pool of hardened blood that had oozed from his broken skull, and a cloud of blue-flies were swarming about his already swollen features. His eyes were open and fixed upon the ceiling in a glazed stare.

Everywhere there was evidence of a terrific struggle. The room was literally torn to pieces. The stones of the open fireplace had been pried up and the ashes were scattered over the room. The rude bunk had been torn apart, the flooring pulled up in places, the high chest of drawers ransacked and their contents flung helter-skelter here and there. In the dead man's cold, clenched hand was one of the gold-pieces that had cost him his life.

"Ol' Eb won't be a-helpin' nobody any more," Clem whispered hoarsely.

"Thet he won't," the others agreed.

"Criminy crickets!" Castle ejaculated as he bent over the body and saw hideous blue imprints of long, slender fingers upon the throat. "Criminy crickets!" he repeated when his eyes fell upon the full imprint of a long thin hand in telltale crimson on the table-top. "Funny th' table wasn't upset," he muttered. "Anyway, this is a case fer my friend Dan Pumphrey, an' no mistake."

He pushed the crowd away, shut the shutters, closed the door and stood with his back against it. Hastily scrawling a message, he sent Clem Wilmer away with it to the telegraph office.

On the Blue Mountain Express at three-fifteen Dan Pumphrey, famous as a crook-catcher, came to Weston. No one paid any attention to the short, grizzled, iron-jawed, gray-eyed man who hurried into a waiting car and was whisked away. Everybody at the station was too busy discussing the tragedy and solving the mystery attached thereto.

"Dirty work here, Castle?" Pumphrey came to the point at once as he crawled from the car and shook hands. "Dirty work, I understand."

"Ought to be easy fer you," Castle answered, unable to conceal his admiration.

They had entered the shack together, and Pumphrey's eyes were going over the disordered room carefully.

"Things as you found them, Castle?"

"Nothin's been touched."

"Humph!" Pumphrey snorted, bending over the body and examining the finger-prints on the dead man's throat with the aid of a powerful glass. "I couldn't possibly go wrong on them."

Castle followed him with shining eyes.

"Humph!" Pumphrey repeated, pulling at his ear, as he studied the imprint of the bloody hand upon the table-top. "I couldn't mistake them in a million, but——"

"Them prints O. K.?" Castle asked.

"Too clear, if anything," Pumphrey replied, seemingly mystified more than a little. "I know those prints as I know myself. They're in every police headquarters in the world. They tell me as plain as day that Brainy Martinez has done this job. They fairly fling that fact at me. That's what has me guessing. Anyway, we'll see if we can land this Martinez bird."

However, in spite of fine-tooth combing all likely places, Brainy Martinez could not be located. He seemed to have disappeared, to have gone absolutely to nothing like a bursted bubble.

Then one golden October when the frost-nipped leaves and the dying grasses were making a painter's palette of the landscape, and hickory-nuts were dropping like hail amidst the shrill barking of the gray squirrels, a crowd of boys burst in upon a nap Chief Castle was taking. They were breathless and fairly bursting with what they had to tell.

"We been huntin' hick'ry-nuts," Johnny Yinkan began between gasps, pushing forward, cap in hand, and acting as spokesman.

"Steady, Johnny!" Castle cautioned as he rubbed his eyes and grinned. "This ain't no place fer bustin', you know."

"We're huntin', Mr. Castle," Johnny

went on, "an' we come plumb on a dead man, an'——"

"A what?" Castle demanded brusquely, immediately becoming all interest.

"A dead man! A skeleton!" they all chorused shrilly, unable to contain themselves longer.

"Whar 'bouts?"

"Up on th' hill back o' Ebenezer Holtzapple's ol' place," they explained. "An' thar's gold scattered all around!"

"Criminy crickets!" Castle exclaimed as he rose and followed the youngsters, who tumbled pellmell into the street.

They scrambled over the rocks and through the underbrush, the big man rolling and puffing, the boys apparently without effort, until they came to the foot of the cliff behind the shack where Ebenezer Holtzapple had lived and died.

"Thar!" the lads shouted together.

"Criminy crickets!" Castle wheezed.

At the foot of the cliff, wedged tightly in between two broken boulders, was a sun-bleached skeleton, picked as clean as a whistle by buzzards and foxes. Tatters of garments were still clinging to the rocks. In the moss and in the midst of the withered leaves several hundred dollars in gold were found, together with a gold-band ring.

"Tried to make his getaway," Castle mumbled. "Thought he'd light out in a direction opposite to his comin'. Wasn't wise to th' cliff, an' in th' dark took an unexpected flip-flap that snuffed him out. Didn't stick 'round much after ol' Eb hisself. Awful way to finish, I'd say."

The celebrated sleuth was sent for.

"So that's why we couldn't find Mr. Martinez," Pumphrey mused as he examined the collection of bones. Then he jerked forward eagerly, his eyes narrowed, and he laughed softly. "Can you beat that?" he murmured. "It's him all right, I guess." He turned to Castle. "That gold ring with his name on it just about clinches things. What do you say, chief?"

"Jus' about clinches things," Castle replied. "Thet Martinez guy sure paid quick fer his dirty doin's."

"We'll let the reporters loose on this, Castle," Pumphrey went on with a faraway look in his eyes. "They'll spread this story broadcast, and maybe it'll serve as an object lesson. The way of the transgressor, you know."

"Thar ain't no tellin'," Castle answered.

"Well, that's a case that solved itself," Pumphrey laughed as he bid Castle good-by, but, settled in his seat on his return trip to the city, he was chuckling and saying over and over again: "A case that solved itself—almost. Clever, Brainy? Well, I guess yes."

A little more than a year later Pumphrey was seated at his desk inscrutably staring at a tall, slender, dark-eyed, black-bearded man, who stood before him with handcuffs on his wrists.

"Too many bones, Martinez," Pumphrey was speaking as if to himself. "Altogether too many bones!"

"I am not Martinez!" the shackled man insisted, his voice trembling with passion. "Martinez is dead. The papers carried columns about the finding of his skeleton a little over a year ago."

"You mustn't believe all you see in the papers, Martinez," Pumphrey went on. "That was old stuff. The newspaper yarns were just to lull you to sleep, just to make you think you had really put one over. I wanted you to climb out of the hole in which you were hiding. You have done that little thing at last, and here you are."

"How can I be a man who is dead? You make me laugh!"

"Listen, Martinez," Pumphrey continued, "and maybe you'll change your tune. He who laughs last, you know."

"I cannot be a dead man!"

"You'll be one soon," Pumphrey insisted.

"This is ridiculous!"

"There was no getting away from the fingerprints on old Holtzapple's throat," Pumphrey explained most deliberately, "and the print of the bloody hand upon the table, but at the time, Martinez, they struck me as being a bit too good. They appeared done with too much care. There was not even a smudge or a blur; they were as clear as crystal. They were leads all right. I

know you too well to think you would give yourself away like that unless you did it purposely, unless there was something behind it. You're too clever to blunder like that, Martinez. That was a bone you pulled there, Brainy. You did your work too well."

The prisoner glared hate at the grizzled detective, and the handcuffs jingled musically to his trembling.

"Finding your ring," Pumphrey spoke slowly, "nearly convinced me that you were dead in spite of my doubts. It seemed rather odd, however, that your skeleton back there at the foot of the cliff should have gimlet-holes in the joints where it was corded or wired together. Doesn't that circumstance strike you now as somewhat peculiar? You put the doctor's articulated skeleton there, Brainy, but it has one rib too many. You planted the ring. You scattered the gold coins amid the leaves. So far so good. Those tricks all worked fine, but you just can't explain away those gimlet-holes, Brainy, or the extra rib. That was another bone play of yours."

Martinez could only gasp as a great fear grew in his eyes. He became a sickly white. At a word from Pumphrey he was led away, shaking horribly, the handcuffs jingling as he moved.

"The whole thing was a clever scheme, Martinez," Pumphrey muttered as the door closed upon the prisoner, "but there were too many bones, Brainy, altogether too many bones!"

SWINDLE LURES AMERICANS TO ARGENTINA

NEARLY a hundred Americans from various parts of the United States, each of them known to be interested in helping a supposed imprisoned bankrupt Argentine banker to recover a secret fortune of $480,000, each hoping to divide it with him, had better abandon hope, according to the Buenos Ayres police, who say there is no such banker and that no such secret fortune exists.

These Americans still, according to the police, are the prospective victims of a gang of Spanish swindlers, four of whom have just been arrested after they had obtained 9,000 pesos from a New Yorker named Roupen Serabian, who arrived here a short time ago to help the banker get his fortune. The police say sixteen other Americans are known to be about to sail for Buenos Ayres, or already are on their way with the same intention of lending their aid to the banker.

A man from Chicago, who recently arrived, was about to pay the band 2,000 pesos when he became suspicious and tightened up his pursestrings.

When the police arrested the alleged leader of the gang, who gave the name Marcelino Niela, they assert that they found in his house a secret compartment containing a list of names and addresses, together with the occupations of several thousand Americans, residing in cities and small towns. In addition, they declare they found nearly one hundred letters from Americans concerning the supposed fortune of the imprisoned banker, and also numerous cablegrams.

The police express the belief that Niela has confederates in the United States who supplied him with the list of names. They assert that the same gang operated in New York about six years ago on a similar project. According to the authorities, Niela, using the name Arturo Gonzales, wrote letters to three thousand Americans, declaring he represented one David Gustavo Lacaze, an imprisoned banker, whose portmanteau was being held by the court because of his failure to pay the costs of his trial, amounting to 9,000 pesos.

This portmanteau, the Americans were informed, contained a secret pocket holding documents which would enable Lacaze to obtain a fortune of $480,000, of which amount $20,000 was in a Chicago bank. To whoever would pay the court costs and enable him to secure the portmanteau Lacaze would give two-thirds of the fortune.

The Gorilla

By KATHERINE STAGG

PART I.

CHAPTER ONE

TONY MULLEN'S birthday party was in full blast back stage at the Odeon Theatre.

A great hurrying of stage hands had taken place to clear the space of props and ropes and all the paraphernalia of vaudeville.

This was at a time when humor and real acting were more valued than they are now.

The stage hands swore a bit more than usual, but they hustled with a will, for Mullen was deservedly popular. The word had gone around that every make-up box that night would contain a bottle of the real stuff to give the feast the right send-off.

Did you ever see Tony Mullen's act, "The Lunatic Gobs"?

It's one of the real big sensational acrobatic acts on the "big time."

Tony was manager and owner of the act. He had picked up several old-time comrades from his navy days to fill in who were up against it when the war left them stranded.

He varied the features of the act from time to time, but always kept the two outstanding hits—big Biff Doran, best known as "the Gorilla," and little Timmy, a dwarf, whose antics were the delight of the children as well as the elders.

The stage was set as part of the deck of a vessel, and all of the actors were dressed in the natty white of the navy.

Sometimes he would ring in a supposed passenger in mufti as a butt of awkwardness, but the "Gorilla's" power and agility and Timmy's nimble and grotesque imitations were the star features.

Now the theatre out front was dark, and receded into a sort of limbo, reversing the ordinary conditions and becoming the background of the scene.

On the stage a long table was arranged, loaded with the best the restaurant next-door could supply.

Tony Mullen was at the centre, reclining in a huge barber's chair borrowed from a comedy act.

At his right was Gypsy LeRoy, who was the only woman in the vaudeville business to do a single act with a dog, but her animal "Boy" was really the biggest star in the whole brilliant company, and boasted a valet all his own. Little Gyp was a good-looker, one of the prettiest bits of humanity one might meet. With the wonderful tricks of the dog, combined with the very attractiveness of the girl, it did not seem strange that they were a riot on any program.

At Mullen's right sat Detective Arundel Marvin, all set for the time of his life. He appreciated the fact that it is a great and unusual privilege to be really on the inside with these people, the most clannish on the face of the earth.

Mullen and Detective Marvin had been buddies in the war, consequently this birthday feast had let down the bars for him.

Next to Marvin were the Flying Deyos and their small son, Dickon, who folks said would probably outdo his parents on the slack wire at no distant day.

At the side of Gyp was a chair for her dog; no floor nor bones for him, if you please, but a satin chair from the best drawing-room set of the theatre and a plate of breast of a guinea-hen.

A bleached blonde with a very pretentious name on the bills, but who was called

"Min" back stage, made up the rest of the party.

Much food had been eaten, many toasts drunk, and now it was the turn of good old song; they ranged from a sentimental ditty rendered by Min to the latest rag.

Nearly every one had done some turn with all their soul, for actors dearly love an audience of their own, when some one asked what had become of Timmy. He had slipped out of his seat in his quick way while attention was centered on one of the singers.

Mullen beckoned Biff, the Gorilla, to come to his side, and whispered softly to him:

"Say, old man, go and look for the little chap, will you? I am afraid he is sulking. He all but crabbed the act at the matinee to-day, and was so scrappy at my calling him down I had to give him a spanking. You know I hate to do it, but he was brought up that way, and it has to be done every so often."

Mullen sighed, even in the midst of the festivities, for at times it was no cinch to be manager of these boys.

Biff grinned a bit ruefully; he looked a monster, but had the true human's weakness, for since he had sat down at the table he had not taken his gaze from Gyp, and now stood as hesitatingly as a schoolboy, actually blushing.

"Aw, say, she is goin' to sing, an' I want to be near. I never saw her, even from the front. The kid won't get lost. He can't get far. I'll go when she gets through."

His mane of rust-colored hair was rumpled, and his small, mottled eyes were burning in a manner almost terrifying as he wheeled with a jungle movement that Mullen noticed. Every one was calling out names of songs that they were entreating Gyp to sing. It was no secret that she was even a finer artist than her dog, and had studied for opera, but a curious fault was hers that had almost made a tragedy of her life. Now and then her throat would shut, as it were, convulsively, and not a note would issue forth. This only happened occasionally, but it was fatal to her hopes. So she, like a little soldier, tossed them away, and started out with a trick dog to earn her living.

Marvin was tickled to death to be part of this riotous and merry crowd, all so artistic and thorough in all they did—even now when the drinks were beginning to show in high voices, sparkling eyes, flushed faces, and the cross-currents of talk that never waited for answers. The world of crime seemed a thousand miles away, and he only wished that he himself knew some stunt that could equal and find favor among these gifted beings, as they seemed to him. He little thought that in a scant few minutes his own line of knowledge would be the only one there that would be of value.

While some one was looking for a guitar or ukelele for Gyp to sing by, a knock, loud and insistent, came on a piece of scenery a few feet back from the players.

"What is that?" exclaimed Mullen.

"Sob-sister Carrie!" a voice piped; "I want an interview."

A door in the scenery opened, and in came a tiny figure, with a slow and mincing gait, shaking its head most dolefully.

It approached Mullen slowly.

A wild shriek of laughter went up, for all had recognized Timmy made up as one of the best known of the daily paper's women writers.

He proceeded to give Mullen and the rest a lecture on the loose morals of the stage that made them all fairly reek with howls and shrieks of mirth.

The drollery of it was superb, and Mullen wondered at it, for he knew too well the curious limits of the little creature's mind, but his gift of sheer imitativeness was beyond question.

"Another bottle!" "Oh, my lord, the monkey that he is!" "The funniest ever!" "Go get him a church!" were a few of the exclamations that greeted the end of his mock homily.

"And now, Gyp, are you ready?" asked Mullen.

"I can never follow a head-liner; I'm too jealous," she said as she wiped the tears of real laughter from her cheeks; "let's just have a good rousing old chorus and then break up. To-morrow comes awful quick."

"Aw, just one song; it's early yet."

"Sing us something uplifting; do, Miss Gyp!" The piping voice came still in the character of sob-sister Carrie.

"I can't, I can't; I've laughed so much that my poor old throat is shutting up now. Come. Altogether: 'He's a jolly good fellow,' the old standby; sing as you never sang before!"

She jumped on the table, and waving a bottle as a baton, she led a chorus that sounded to Detective Marvin as if it must knock at the very gates of fate, it was so heartfelt and jolly.

Gyp's throat, so round and white, was far from playing any tricks, for her voice rose and thrilled through the empty theatre like a silver bell; every one was on his feet, every eye upraised to her glowing face——

When the lights went out and a single pistol shot was heard.

For a moment they all thought it was part of the capers that some one had staged for a final surprise, but when the pause seemed overlong Marvin produced a pocket flash, and in less than two seconds they saw that Tony Mullen was lying in a huddled heap in his chair, stone dead.

CHAPTER TWO

ONE of the boys had had the presence of mind to run to the switchboard, and in a moment the lights flashed on.

It was a curiously dramatic scene. Little Gyp still stood on the table, very near Mullen's dead body, almost over it, her right hand grasping the bottle she had so roguishly waved in rhythm as a baton. The others were mostly in their places, although they now came crowding toward the central figure.

The flushed faces, the wild eyes were still more excited, but with horror instead of jollity, all that gay and innocent joy changed in a second.

What desperate veiled intent could have been hidden among that company, seemingly in such perfect accord?

Detective Marvin's first thought was not of the weapon, for by second nature he had already glimpsed a small pistol lying on the floor just back of Mullen's chair. So lightning quick does a trained mind sense the important point that his intent gaze ran up and down the table in one flash to note whose would be the empty chair.

It was that of Biff Doran, the Gorilla!"

Yet Marvin swore to himself that he had seen Biff in his place when the scene was plunged in darkness.

That might mean that he had an accomplice, who had turned off the lights, giving Biff the opportunity to shoot and make a getaway. But it was much more likely that whoever had done it had turned the lights off on his way in, fired the shot, and run out before Marvin had used his pocket flash. He realized when it was too late that he, too, had thought the shot was a part of the entertainment and had waited at least a few never-to-be-regained seconds.

Few of the company knew that Marvin was a detective. They had supposed he was some specially intimate business friend of the dead manager.

He did not look the part of a "flatty," for he was a tall and strikingly handsome fellow, the well-set-up college-man type.

He usually did society stuff—jewels, bonds and the like—but none the less he was quite capable of handling rougher cases when called upon.

He was about to show his badge as authority in order to take charge, for he was the coolest-minded person there, when the light went out for the second time. There was a piercing shriek—a sound like the tearing of silk in vast quantity, a peculiar high, shrill sound that would ring in his ears for many a day; then a heavy fall. He felt the impact of a body as something hurtled against him.

Again the lights came on, and he found himself with Gyp clinging to him, but with her eyes open and one hand clutching her throat.

She shook her head violently, but evidently could not utter a word.

Was it she who had given that queer scream? And why? Had she stumbled

while trying to get down from the table? Or had she played up to distract attention from some one else?

Here was a mystery.

Placing her in his own chair, Marvin glanced quickly toward the lad who had turned on the lights before, but he was in his place and pale as a ghost, as indeed was all the company.

The only unperturbed member was the dog, who still sat in his satin chair. He was quiet and undisturbed in expression, evidently taking all this commotion to be part of the ordinary affairs of these stage people. Patiently and disdainfully he sat there, waiting for his cue, not quite understanding if this were a new kind of rehearsal or just what.

Marvin saw that the dog, however, true to his nature, had grabbed some fragment and held it in his teeth.

Knowing the habits of a bull, he knew instantly that it would be useless for him to try and pry it from those powerful jaws, although it might be a most invaluable clue.

How could he get it? If Gyp were concerned in the crime, even as the cause, and her actions surely showed a great degree of shock, if that scream had been hers, she would not likely help him to retrieve that bit of something held so firmly by the dog. But get it he must.

For a wild second he thought of trying a close shot to see if he could frighten the dog to the point of loosening his teeth on the fragment. But he rightly rejected the idea as nothing less than imbecile and wondered if his own wits were going bla-a.

Those clamped jaws would obey only the voice of Gyp, his mistress, and nothing could be gotten from her but that weak and convulsive shaking of her head.

There followed a few moments of confusion. Each person present had been requested to stay in his or her place at the table, while Marvin had a phone brought to him where he sat. He made up his mind he would not take his eyes off the dog until some plan came to him to get possession of whatever it was he held.

A few words to the precinct captain, and then all there was to do was to wait until the examiner arrived.

"Say, boss," one of the gobs asked timidly, "oughtn't we to clean up a bit? How about these here bottles?"

Marvin couldn't help a smile at the ingenious lad's question; it relieved the tension, anyhow.

"Don't worry; I didn't call up the narcotic nor even the booze squad; nothing like that, my boy."

"But ain't it all the same police?"

"The same, and not the same," Martin cryptically answered; the subtleties of the position might bear considerable explanation if the lad were as green as the question sounded.

But even these few remarks helped, for now they began a torrent of question and answer, each vying with the other in most varied recollections of what had just occurred.

With a gesture Marvin had to call a halt on this; they must keep their individual memories of the affair intact, he told them, for evidence.

This brought them to a shuddering realization of the climax of their night's hilarity.

While they waited there was a sound of heavy footsteps at the stage door down a long wooden passage to the right of the wings. In ordinary circumstances no one would have noticed this particularly, but now a dead silence came, and they watched in sheer suspense to see who would step through the opening between the forest trees painted roughly on canvas, which was usually the entrance of the dancing act that closed the show.

It was now about two o'clock in the morning, and the street outside had become very quiet, so the advancing steps sounded portentous and foreboding of evil as steps are apt to do in such gloomy surroundings.

Even Gyp, the gayest of the gay, sat in her chair, huddled and grasping her lovely white throat as if pain held her in its grip to such a degree that she even breathed with difficulty.

Into this scene strode Biff Doran, the "Gorilla."

"Say, folks," he bellowed, "whatja doin'? Where's all the pep gone? Holdin' a seance?"

A pause of seconds, then he seemed to sense that something had happened.

"What's eatin' all of yer? G-r-r!" The sound was indescribable, for he had caught sight of the body of Mullen. He followed this by a volley of oaths from various countries—picturesque but just a little too voluble for Detective Marvin's ears.

And, too, Biff Doran might be a pretty good actor, but that type of almost-monster seldom had much gray matter in their heads.

He had changed his clothes while he had been out, and why should he have done this unless the dog was even at that moment holding in his still clamped teeth a piece of Doran's wearing apparel? Still that would be awfully obvious; even such a big fool would hardly pull such a childish play.

The Gorilla's mottled eyes glowed incandescently, and a sneer twisted his face.

He gave Detective Marvin one contemptuous glance in reply to his gesture of restraint. A fancy line of cuss words seemed out of place in the presence of death.

"So he's got his at last, did he?" he growled.

This remark was carefully noted on the cylinder of Marvin's memory for future reference.

"Where you been?" he snapped.

Biff wheeled with that long circling movement that so vividly suggested the jungle, and stared with glowering eyes into the calm gaze of Marvin.

He seemed to consider open resentment at first, then thought better of it, and answered roughly:

"Aw, I went out to get a long-distance call for Mullen if it will do you any good to know."

"It may do considerable good when we hear what it was," the detective replied grimly.

Biff looked him over again, kicked a chair around, seated himself, and lighted a huge cigar. He shrugged his massive shoulders and laughed uglily.

"Will you have that message now or wait till you get it?" he sneered.

Marvin was spared the trouble of answering the big bully, for two things happened simultaneously. He saw that little Gyp was trying to attract the attention of Biff by some ill-concealed pantomime, and he heard the tramp, tramp, tramp of the police coming down the passage from the stage door.

CHAPTER THREE

THE usual routine followed. The medical examiner declared that Mullen had been shot at short range and had died instantly. The weapon was a small pistol that was identified as belonging to Mullen himself; nearly every one present knew it well.

Several of the gobs testified that they knew he had it in his pocket that night, as they had seen it when he had paid a bill for new costumes that were expected to be delivered at the theatre in the morning.

The pistol lay in such a position on the floor that his murderer most likely had shot him from behind; still his head had fallen forward to an angle that made Marvin think that it was equally possible he had been shot from above. However, he kept this idea to himself.

Marvin rather hoped that he was due for a big case, and felt that if this one was given to him to solve that he wanted all his movements to be as untrammeled by red tape as possible. He merely answered the questions put to him by the police in a perfunctory way.

Mullen's cash, watch, a valuable stick-pin and two diamond rings were found on him, so that eliminated any idea of robbery.

Police Captain Bob Henry rather fancied himself when conducting a preliminary examination. He proceeded to make elaborate notes of the answers to his questions of the people present.

Gypsy shuddered and cowered in a chair with one hand on her dog, but not a word could they get out of her. Her throat trou-

ble was explained, however, and she was allowed to nod her head in reply to her name and general status.

The girl "Min," on the contrary, wanted to be so circumstantial that her torrent of explanation had to be cut short. She did not like this squelching, and resumed her seat with the very acid speech: "Mullen was a good guy, all right, but for one thing; there's about fifty-seven husbands in this business who might have gone gunning for him with good reason, if I don't mention any names."

A suppressed snicker was heard, but quickly subsided, for the gobs were just a little bit subdued by the tragedy.

Captain Henry was very dignified and business-like, but when he came to the figure of Timmy—for he had taken the pedigree and statement of each in turn as they still sat at the table—he looked at the curious little creature in some bewilderment. Timmy was still in the alpaca dress of the woman he had so surprisingly impersonated, and he certainly was enough to puzzle any one, even a wise policeman.

"Who and, I might say, what are you?" demanded the captain.

For answer the skirts flew over his head, were hurled toward the back of the stage, and Timmy appeared in his tiny gob suit.

"Say, now he's dead," pointing coolly to Mullen's body, "who'll be running the act? I'm the only actor in it that's worth much, but I want to know right now who's going to be the boss."

Oddly enough, it is probable that this aspect of the affair had not struck any of the show people, and yet it was literally their bread and butter.

"That's neither here nor there, little boy," the captain said sententiously. "Tell me at once, and exactly what happened; just where were you when Mr. Mullen was shot?"

"Sound asleep in my bed at our perfectly grand rooming house, sir," Timmy replied with that daredevil way of his that was so queer and thwarting.

The captain was getting decidedly huffy, called one of the bluecoats to him, and whispered a moment. But he seemed to conclude that the dwarf was merely a nuisance, so he motioned the policeman to take the small figure down to the end of the table and beckoned to the Deyo family.

As they came forward the girl "Min" lighted a cigarette and learned her elbows on the table with a manner of being in a front box at some very exciting play.

The Deyos came slowly toward the captain, both very pale and rigid.

After giving their names and saying that they were on the same bill, but otherwise did not belong to the gob show, they waited in very apparent discord and apprehension. Their story was a repetition of the others until the male part of the sketch was asked if he had known Mullen before this engagement.

The woman tried to answer for him, but he replied sulkily: "I never saw the guy before this week here at the Odeon, but my wife used to work in one of his shows when he had a big dancing act."

So the rollcall went forward, and presently it came the turn of the "Gorilla" to answer questions.

He succinctly reported that he knew absolutely nothing of the matter, as he had gone out of the theatre about ten minutes before the crime was committed.

"Why did you leave this very merry party at just this time?" asked the captain sharply.

Detective Marvin noticed that some of the bluster had gone out of Doran's manner, but a most unholy light was burning in his mottled eyes that looked more like triumph than any more seemly show of feeling.

"I went to get a long-distance call from Boston for Mullen," he replied in his big voice, now moderated and under control.

"Long distance from who?" tersely if not grammatically snapped the captain.

"His wife," boomed the Gorilla, and waved a long arm in the general direction of the Bay State.

There was a groan, a gasp and a titter from the three women present.

"What was that message?"

"Love and kisses for his birthday." The mushy words were too ridiculous from that

giant of a man, but his face was a mask, only those mottled eyes gleaming most uncannily.

"That will do. You people don't seem to have the proper sense of the seriousness of this matter. But somebody will ride for it. Marvin, you were present here to-night, and I'll give you charge of the case for the police. This flock of freaks have all testified that they are living in the same theatrical rooming house on 28th street, and they may go to this place, but will have to be under surveillance until we sift this thing a little further."

"All right," said Marvin. "Take charge of the dog, as a very important witness!"

It took more than an hour for the necessary arrangements to be made for the removal of the body after flashlight photographs had been taken. Then came the careful herding of the party.

They were sent, police escorted, to their theatrical habitat, a place known from one end of the country to the other as "Maggie's."

Maggie had been a burlesque queen in the days when Niblo's Garden was the heart of the town.

She was a bulky lady of great good nature, and never complained when her lodgers took down the beds, stood them in a corner and spread the mattresses on the floor, to be used for their various practise exercises.

It was all in the day's work, thought Maggie, and the guys were sure to hand her a little extra when they left.

Marvin gave instructions that no one was to leave the premises of Maggie's hospitable mansion, but they could have the freedom of the house, carefully watched by the police.

He detailed a husky chap named Kaney to take the dog to the station-house, along with the negro who attended to the wants of the canine star.

Gyp had shown some feeling at being separated from her pet, but had submitted with good grace. She hugged the ugly animal as if he were worth his weight in rubies, and he also went through a demonstration of feeling that was creditable, but he held on to that fragment, just the same, and if Gyp noticed it, she gave no sign.

So, after a cup of very strong coffee, we find Detective Marvin making himself at home in a cell sitting on a cot with the dog opposite and beginning a game of ingratiation that was singularly like a game of chess. Marvin had banked on the idea that the dog would drop the thing when offered food, but that promised to be a waiting game, for the most tempting bits were gazed at with looks of scorn.

To be sure, he had feasted at the party, but just plain dogs were ready for a juicy piece of beefsteak most any time.

Could Gyp telepath to that dog? And had she somehow given him a silent command when she bade the animal good-by?

Several hours passed in this peculiar duel of wits and endurance; Marvin tried coaxing and threats, but to no avail; the dog still gazed at him with dignity and patience.

It was nearly noon and Marvin felt beaten, for, of course, real force was out of the question, as the animal was too valuable for that, not to mention the admiration Marvin felt in the dog's fidelity.

But a weak spot in his armor of self-control was found at last when a violent thunder-storm broke over the city.

The lightning was incessant and the thunder like the volley of cannon. The dog trembled at the first loud crash, but strove to endure the ordeal until there came one fearful burst of ripping sound that shook the very walls, when the poor beast could keep it up no longer. He dropped the messy bit on the floor and fled under the cot, defeated in spirit by the one thing in nature that could have broken the clamp of those jaws.

Marvin gingerly picked up the object, fearing the dog might recover his courage and spring for him. But another opportune crash gave him time to get out of the cell, leaving poor "Boy" to the ravages of failure, if a dog can think of such a thing as an abstract idea.

Out in the office Marvin looked at his prize, and knew his instinct had been right. It was a clue that would surely lead to the

trail of the man or woman who had fired that shot.

It proved to be a much-chewed and wet bit of fine cambric with about half of a monogram that looked like the upper part of the letter "T" done in lavender silk.

It most probably was a piece of a handkerchief, or might be the torn fragment of a shirt sleeve, but there it was, and Marvin put it away very carefully in his bill file for future reference.

Then he took time for a quick trip to his own rooms. A cold plunge, a shave and a change of clothes, and he felt quite visibly refreshed and more than a bit jubilant over his quasi-victory.

As often happens, now that he had won the battle, Marvin stretched to his full height, six feet two, and felt a real twinge of sympathy for the loser in their fight.

He would make amends to the valiant little beast and possibly advance his game at the same time by getting Gyp on the phone and inviting her to join him and the dog for a lunch.

As he took up the phone he wondered if Gyp would find her voice to answer it.

(*Continued in our next issue*)

FOIL DIAMOND SMUGGLERS

HOW expert the Custom House authorities are in discovering smugglers of diamonds is well illustrated in an article on diamond smuggling, contributed by H. Gernsback to the *Electrical Experimenter,* in which he related how on a westward trip of an Atlantic liner he made a bet with a diamond merchant that the latter could not get two 1 1-3 carat diomands past the Custom House at New York. Both he and the merchant sent wireless despatches to the Collector of Customs announcing the bet, so there was no actual attempt at swindling, merely a test of the cleverness of the searchers.

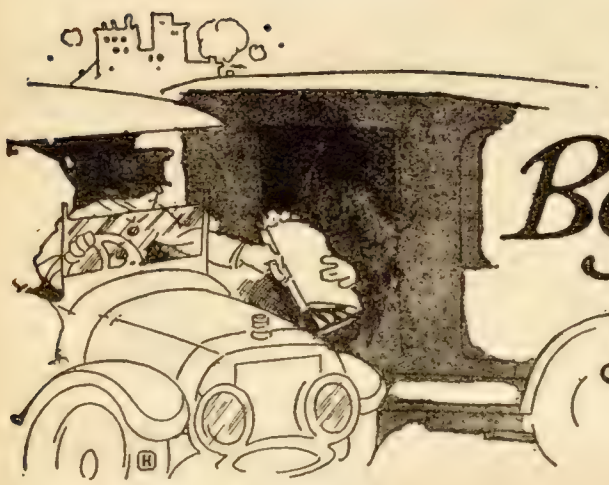
When they arrived at New York they were taken into a room where the merchant's effects were thoroughly examined.

"They probed and shook his shoes to see if there were any concealed stones in the heels and set them carefully aside along with all the other objects," continued Mr. Gernsback. "One of the men then started the X-ray apparatus and inspected each and every suspected object through the fluoroscope. Shoes, hair-brushes, pipes, etc., were soon eliminated, but when the operator came to a cake of toilet soap he smiled broadly and laid it aside. Several more objects gave negative results until he came to the shaving brush. One look and more broad smiles. Finally Mr. S—— was asked to stand in front of the bulb and he was carefully X-rayed, not a part of his body escaping the merciless rays that search out everything. But there was nothing hidden on Mr. S—— as far as could be learned.

"The operator then shut off the current and turning on the light again, which had been turned off while the search was going on, he took the cake of soap and broke it in two. Sure enough, inside of it there was a 1 3-4-carat diamond hidden in a hole neatly cut out by means of a penknife. From another piece of soap a plug had been fashioned, the hole closed up, and after Mr. S—— had washed his hands a number of times no one could have told that the cake of soap contained almost a thousand-dollar diamond.

"The case of the shaving brush was almost identical. Mr. S—— had whittled a hole into the handle of the brush and had hidden therein one big diamond. The hole had then been closed by a wooden plug from a similar piece of wood, and after carefully sandpapering the end and polishing it by means of a little oil, the hole could not be detected except by the X-ray."

Diamonds do not show up very well in X-ray pictures, but the holes in which they are concealed show up very well, no matter how carefully they be plugged.



"The Best Man"

by

J. F. T. West

THERE was a wedding in progress at the Church of Our Lady of the Mountain. A dozen or so uninvited guests, mostly women and children, lingered about the steps to see the bride and groom come out and drive away. Weddings and funerals furnished good entertainment to the shabby quarter with its strangely mixed nationalities.

Since the wedding was at tne Church of Our Lady of the Mountain, it goes without saying it was not a fashionable affair in the sense that an account of it would appear in the society columns of next morning's papers. If a report did appear anywhere it would be among the police news items.

Ranney Lewis had ceased to be a topic of any interest for three years. Since a judge had sentenced him to a year in the big house up the river Ranney had disappeared from the public eye. The term had been served, less the usual time allowed for model conduct, and Ranney was a free man and a reformed one.

The reform, early struggles and ultimate modest success of a second-rate crook have no newspaper value at all. The union of Ranney Lewis, foreman of the shipping room of an import firm near Bowling Green, to Miss Polly White, one of the most popular young women packers in a cracker factory over on West Broadway, was attracting very little attention in any circles.

Three taxis were drawn up along the curb, waiting for the wedding party. The odd dozen of curious loitered on the steps and peeped in at the church door. That was all.

A yellow cab stood first of the three. It was one of those independent cabs that trade on their resemblance to the cars of syndicate operators, a shabby vehicle and yet rather pathetically spruced up for the occasion. Its paint and brass had been shined, there was a bouquet of roses within it.

The driver of the vehicle wore a rose in the lapel of his coat. He lounged in his seat, smoking the inevitable cigarette and keeping his eye on the church door for the appearance of his fares.

This driver was one of those youths of indefinite age, anywhere between nineteen and thirty, thin, sallow-faced, shrewd, a duplicate of hundreds who pilot taxis about city streets. He hunched in his seat, puffing the cigarette and eyeing the church door with a cynical grin. Wedding, gun fight or

funeral mattered nothing to him. His whole attitude said so.

The swinging panel opened and a man ran down the steps without pausing to put on his hat. He was dressed with some regard for the occasion, wearing a white carnation in his buttonhole. He smiled as he hurried to the yellow taxi and beckoned its driver to a whispered conference. As he beckoned a greenback appeared in his fingers and added interest to what he had to say.

"Look here, fellow, you're going to drive the bride and groom, ain't you?"

The taxi driver grinned assent, his sharp eyes on the greenback the other held in his fingers.

"Well, I'm one of his pals, see? The boys are framing a little joke on him. Here, this is for you." He passed over the greenback, a ten-dollar bill.

"What do I do?"

"What you do is easy. We ain't going to tie no shoes on the back of the car nor nothing rough like that. This bird is too hard boiled for that kind of gags, see? He's going to tumble to anything rough like that in a minute. What we are going to do is something he won't know about till he opens his bag at the hotel to-night. We got a phony bag fixed up for him with a good red-hot joke in it, if you get what I mean?" He paused to wink broadly.

The taxi driver grinned with him. "Where do I come in?" he demanded. "Talk fast; they'll be coming out in a minute!"

"Here's how you come in. The bag we fixed up is the double for Ranney's own bag, see. I have got it in that cab over there. I will trail you when you start for the Pensy station. The idea is when I draw alongside you up in the traffic, you take the bag I slip you and hand me Ranney's bag. When you drop Ranney and his girl at the station you hand Ranney the phony bag. Soon as they've gone on the train I'll fix it up to ship his right bag after him. Do you get the idea?"

"This is a josh, is it?" the driver demanded with a sharp look.

"Sure! Just a joke on the bride and groom. What'd you think it was, a gunplay?"

"Friend of this Ranney Lewis?"

"Friend! Think I'd be best man at his wedding if I wasn't?"

The driver looked thoughtful. Then he nodded slowly. "All right, I got you! I'll get behind a truck or a street car up along Seventh avenue and we'll trade bags." He grinned.

"Ataboy! Lookout, they're coming now!"

With a wave of the hand the hatless man sped away. He did not return to the church and the wedding party, darting instead to the taxi which, he had indicated, waited for him at the distant corner.

The church doors opened. A smiling, rather self-conscious party of eight or ten, headed by bride and groom, came down the steps. They distributed themselves between the three waiting taxis and were driven off to the modest restaurant where the parents of the bride were doing the honors demanded by etiquette.

Meantime the investigator of the practical joke had been driven around the corner in his cab. He stopped at a busy drugstore where there were several public telephone booths and twice as many prospective telephoners waiting their turn to use the instruments.

The name of this man was George Call. He was about thirty years old, slender, rather tall, smooth-shaven. He dressed and looked a thoroughly hard-boiled man of the world.

In the cab he removed the festive white carnation from his lapel and donned a soft felt hat, carried in his pocket.

When his turn came Call entered a hot, steamy little glass and wood box and called police headquarters, asking for Captain Murphy of the detective bureau. Assured that he was speaking to Murphy, he delivered his brief message:

"Listen, cap, here's a straight tip. You're looking for the guy that got the Cassell sparklers, ain't you? Well, be down at the Pensy station at 2 o'clock at the train that leaves for Washington, D. C. Meet Ranney Lewis, red-haired fellow, freckled face, about five feet three. Yeah, that's him!

Ranney Lewis that was sent up for a cigar store robbery three years ago! He's got the stuff in his handbag, see? A black-seal leather bag. Got it with him. G'by!"

George Call hung up the telephone promptly.

Just as promptly he squeezed out of the little booth, making way for the next patron.

With the same commendable promptness he slipped out of the drugstore and had himself driven rapidly uptown, because he knew the first thing the police detective would do would be to trace the telephone call.

In the dusk of his taxi George Call reviewed his work and allowed himself the luxury of a grin. He had heard of various sorts of practical jokes on newlyweds, but this beat them all! It beat them all, because, in Call's opinion, it combined business and pleasure in just exactly the degree he approved of. In one stroke he was evening up a grudge of long standing, a hatred of Ranney Lewis that had rankled and festered for three years, and at the same time providing the police with a perfect scapegoat for the sensational Cassell jewel robbery. With the evidence they would find in possession of Ranney Lewis, backed by his previous record of a year's imprisonment for robbery, the police would have no difficulty at all in convicting him of the crime.

To be sure, the most valuable part of the loot from the Cassell mansion would never be found in possession of Lewis. George Call had that safely hidden. Presently, when suspicion was sufficiently diverted to Lewis, he meant to dispose of it at a handsome figure.

He prided himself on never forgetting an insult. His score against Ranney Lewis was totaled in the course of one brief evening in Chicago eighteen months ago.

The latter, out of prison and meaning to stay straight, was in that city looking for work. Call suggested to him that they collaborate in relieving a country bank of its surplus cash. Lewis refused to join him. His virtue irritated Call. Later in the same evening the latter saw fit to insult a girl in a restaurant. Though the girl was a stranger to Lewis, the red-haired, freckled-face ex-crook took it on himself to avenge the insult by giving Call an unmerciful thrashing. Most irritating of all, when Call, beaten, begged for mercy, Lewis had spurned him with his foot and referred to him as a "cheap second-rater who had better stay out in the sticks stealing nickels from church collection-boxes if he wanted to keep out of trouble."

Call had proved he was no second-rater by getting away with the Cassell jewels unaided. He felt quite safe in staying in New York, for he had no police record. Then, as luck would have it, he heard Ranney Lewis was to be married and conceived his plan to switch suspicion for the jewel robbery and even his score with Lewis in a single operation.

The one thing necessary was to keep out of Lewis's sight. This Call managed to do very cleverly.

The taxi had dodged as far as Forty-second street by this time, and Call instructed his driver to turn about and carry him back to the restaurant where he knew the wedding party was feasting. Parking the cab at a discreet distance, he remained hidden, waiting the exit of bride and groom, who would next go to the railroad station to begin their honeymoon journey.

It was easy for Call to keep an eye on the yellow taxi. He was glad that Ranney Lewis was no piker! Another man might have saved money by dismissing the cab and calling another when he was ready. But not Ranney Lewis on his wedding day! Lewis's prodigality simplified matters for his enemy.

Finally the driver dismounted from his seat and went into the restaurant at word from a waiter. Going to get the bags, Call decided. He leaned forward and notified his own driver to be ready to follow the yellow taxi. Then he patted the black bag on the seat beside him, the bag he had prepared with its damning evidence after he had watched Lewis buy its mate in a trunk store the day before.

The driver of the yellow cab came out. He was smoking a newly lighted cigar, a

gift from the groom, no doubt, and carried a bright new yellow suitcase, the bride's, and that black-seal leather bag Call had duplicated. He set the bags on the driver's seat beside him and held open the door for his fares.

Call saw bride and groom run out, followed by friends, who showered them with rice. The door of the yellow cab slammed and the vehicle darted from the curb. Call's cab started in its wake.

The two taxis turned into Seventh avenue. In the yellow one Ranney Lewis and his bride sat strangely silent, awed a little by their newly married state.

Lewis's plain, freckled face looked preternaturally solemn. When his bride moved closer to him and touched his hand caressingly he burst out: "It don't seem real somehow. You and me married! I guess I must have been smoking hop or sniffing the happy dust or something! You and me married!"

"But it's true," said the recent Polly White, now Polly Lewis. "Look!" To prove the reality she pointed to the plain gold band that adorned her finger. "You can't get away from that for proof!" she smiled.

"Polly, I'm not worth it!" Lewis said humbly. "It—it doesn't seem right! A girl like you and a—a big bum like me. Why, I'm not fit to walk on the same side of the street you walk on."

"That'll do for you!" Polly cried, clapping her hand over her husband's mouth. "Can that chatter from now on. You've made good, Ranney Lewis. I guess you showed the world that even a—even a fellow that started with a handicap like you had can make a decent man out of himself if he wants to! I guess you showed the world that Ranney Lewis can come back."

"*You* showed the world, you mean! It was you that made me do it. It was you did everything, Polly! If it hadn't been for you, and you saying all the time that you believed in me, that you knew I would stay straight and get a job and make good on it, where would I be? Where? Back with that crooked bunch I used to run with, or else up the river doing another stretch. It's you that takes all the bows for both of us, Polly. You did it, all by yourself!"

Polly blushed with pleasure. "Ranney," she said softly and earnestly, "you'll always go straight now, won't you, Ranney?"

Lewis nodded solemnly. "As long as you want me to, kid."

Their taxi had slowed down to a crawl, caught behind a slow-moving van, hedged in for the moment by a press of other vehicles.

Past the window another cab crept and likewise slowed down.

Bride and groom, intent on each other, had no eyes to see a hand emerge from the door of the passing vehicle and pass to their own driver a black-seal leather bag, duplicate of Ranney's newly bought one.

Presently the yellow cab was in the dusky carriageway of the big terminal and a porter was opening the door for Ranney Lewis.

Lewis and his bride were following the red cap into the station when the cab carrying Call drew up. Call followed them at a leisurely stroll, meaning to see and enjoy all that happened, but from a discreet distance.

There was a press of passengers about the ticket man at the gate leading to the Washington train. The newly married couple joined the slow-moving queue, Lewis now carrying the suitcase and bag. In the background, waiting developments, George Call idled.

A heavy hand fell on Lewis's shoulder. He whirled about impatiently.

"Come over here a minute, Ranney," said the husky voice of Captain of Detectives Murphy. "I've got to see what you're carrying in that bag."

"Take your hand off me!" Lewis cried angrily. "There's nothing in this bag you want to see. I got to catch my train."

"No you don't, Lewis! You come over here with me, you and the lady, too."

"You haven't got anything on me!" Lewis chattered. "Nobody's got anything on me any more. You know I've been holding down a job and keeping straight! Have a heart!"

"Sorry, kid," said Captain Murphy firmly, "but business is business."

"But, cap, I just got married to-day. This is my wife. We're on our honeymoon."

Murphy grinned down on Polly clasping her husband's arm, her eyes wide with excitement.

"If that's the truth, I'm sorry for you," he said bluntly. "I'm going to be a whole lot sorrier if that bag of Ranney's has in it what I think it has."

The detective had the bag as he spoke. Lewis and Polly, making the best of defeat, drew aside with him, and Murphy, using the key Lewis gave him, spread the bag wide.

Clothes met the detective's gaze. He tossed them out, article by article, his skilled fingers going over each garment for anything concealed in pockets or lining. When the bag was empty Murphy continued to prod in its leather interior. He looked up at last, and his face was red with embarrassment and frankly puzzled. The bag held nothing incriminating.

"Somebody's been stringing us, or else you've switched the stuff," he grumbled.

"Just what did you suppose you were going to find?" Ranney Lewis demanded triumphantly.

Murphy did not answer the question. He said: "You'll both have to come up to the station, that's all there is to it. You've got to be searched."

Lewis's protest was drowned by another voice. A stranger had joined the group. It was the driver of the yellow taxi.

"Listen, Captain Murphy," the driver whispered hurriedly. "I'll tell you where the bag is that you're looking for. That tall, skinny chap behind the pillar's got it in his hand now. Grab him!"

"How do you know?" Murphy growled.

"Because he's the bird that tried to switch his bag for Ranney's."

Murphy straightened up and gave a signal to a uniformed patrolman standing near. Suddenly George Call found himself an unwilling participant in the little drama he himself had staged.

The black bag he carried was torn from his grasp and broken open. Within it were enough articles missing from the Cassell mansion to convict him beyond the shadow of doubt.

Within the beat of sixty seconds it was George Call who was under detention and Ranney Lewis who was the spectator at the play.

The former was a more surprised man than the victim of his clever practical joke. The best he could do was to stare at them all and open and close his mouth rapidly, without uttering a sound, like a fish on dry land.

The driver of the yellow cab spoke: "This is the wise guy that flagged me when I was waiting outside the church for Polly and Ranney. Wanted to play a joke on the bride and groom, he said. Told me to have Ranney's bag ready to switch for the phony one he had fixed up. His cab passed me up on Seventh avenue and we made the switch. Only what he didn't see was that instead of trading him Ranney's bag I gave him back his own. And like a sap he hung onto it. I didn't know what he was up to, but I knew one thing plain enough: he was a liar and he didn't mean Ranney Lewis any good. I tumbled to that the minute he told me he was best man at the wedding."

"Well, who the devil are you?" Murphy asked.

"Me? I'm the guy that was invited to be best man at Ranney Lewis's wedding, that's all. But I didn't have no proper clothes, and I ain't any hand to go around weddings and parties, anyhow, so I flagged the job."

The taxi driver reddened, grinned and scuffed his shoes along the marble pavement. In his embarrassment he looked nearer his own age, little more than an overgrown boy.

"I didn't want to be no best man," he grinned. "Driving my cab's what I can do best. But I knew one thing when this bird came along and told me he was best man, I knew he was a liar, and he never put anything over on me, not for a minute!"

"But who are you? What's your name?"

It was the bride who answered.

"Every word he says is true, captain! He's my kid brother."

Women Detectives

By RANDOLPH C. BAXTER

EVERYBODY has read thrilling stories of beautiful ladies moving in the best circles of society and acting as political spies. It is not generally known that there are women employed by some of the big detective agencies in New York to track thieves of the lowest type. They are also employed on blackmailing cases, and sometimes, when they have nothing better on hand, they act as store detectives for some of the large dry-goods houses. As such they saunter through the different departments, ostensibly as "floor-walkers," but in reality keeping a sharp lookout for shoplifters. But store detectives in general are taken from behind the counter. A good female detective who has worked up cases for a detective agency will never stay in a dry-goods house when she can get outside cases, as the salary of a store detective is not sufficiently remunerative. The largest salary ever paid to a female store detective in New York City was drawn by Miss Louise Stanley, who was for some time employed by R. H. Macy & Co. She received $1,500 a year, and it is said that she was one of the brightest detectives in this country. She left Macy's to become a spotter on the sleeping coaches of one of the large Western railroads.

The graduates from behind the counter do not always make the best detectives, however. "A counter graduate is all very well in her way," said one of Pinkerton's men, "and may catch a pilferer quicker than chain lightning, but put her on an outside case and the chances are ten to one that she will prove a failure."

The manager of one of the largest detective agencies in the city says that it is one of the most difficult things in the world for a woman to become a good detective. He says that they are generally lacking in some one thing; that one would be too flighty, another too nervous, and only one was found who had all the qualities combined for the making of a good detective. Pinkerton's whole force put together couldn't get ahead of her.

"Do you know of such a woman?" he was asked.

"Yes," said he, "I do know of just such a woman, and I predict that she will yet make one of the finest detectives in the country."

"Can you give me her history?"

"I will do better than that," he replied; "I will give you her name and address and you can call and see her for yourself. Her name is Mrs. Jennie Tiffany."

Mrs. Tiffany was a tall, slender young woman of twenty-eight, with brown hair, large, earnest-looking gray eyes and a pale, resolute face, which lighted up wonderfully when she talked. In answer to the inquiry how she began such work, she said:

"It all came about through my renting a furnished room to one of Pinkerton's detectives—a Mr. Ryan. I was living in Boston then and was supporting my husband, myself and our little three-year-old boy by renting out furnished rooms and keeping boarders."

Mrs. Tiffany pulled a work-basket out from under the table and took from it a dainty little baby dress and held it up for my inspection. "It is not quite finished yet, but it soon will be. You see, my baby keeps me busy," she said, smiling, as she put the little dress away again. The writer felt thoroughly puzzled. She was so ladylike and her manners so refined, and she looked so domesticated and contented as she sat there telling about her baby, that it seemed more and more strange that she could really be a detective. One secretly wondered if she had ever hunted down a real criminal, and tried to picture her on the track

of some daring burglar or drug fiend, but the effort was futile. She must have guessed at these thoughts, for almost immediately she said:

"I know you think it strange that I should be a detective. I will go back now to where I started from and tell you how I became one. As I have already told you, it came about indirectly through my renting out a furnished room to one of Pinkerton's detectives. He told me I had the making of a good detective in me, and often he would say to me: 'If you would only do detective work, Mrs. Tiffany, you would make ten times as much money as you do at keeping boarders.' Well, I thought the matter over and came to the conclusion that at any rate I would try my hand at it and if I found it paid me it would be time enough then to give up keeping boarders. Well, I stated my views on the subject to my detective boarder, and the long and short of it was that he gave me a small case to work up, and then another and another, and sometimes I would help him on some of his big cases. Finally I started in alone on my own first big case. I was successful and was amply repaid for my services. You know now," she said, "how I came to be a detective and——"

"But," interrupting her, "you have left the most interesting part out. You have told how you became a detective, but you have not told anything about your cases. Can't you give the history of some of them?"

Mrs. Tiffany looked thoughtful for a moment, and then said: "I do not mind telling you about the big case I just mentioned, but I will have to withhold my client's name, also that of the criminal. How I got the case was in this way: A very wealthy ex-senator and lawyer, living in Boston, who had known me from the time I was a child and knew that I had been successful in working up the cases given me by Pinkerton's detective, sent me a note one day telling me that he had a big case for me and appointing a time for me to call and see him about it. I went to see him at the time appointed, and this is what he told me: 'My son,' said he, 'is engaged to be married to a beautiful girl against whom I have nothing whatever, but I have refused to consent to my son marrying her until I know for a certainty who and what the girl's mother is. She claims that she is Mrs. ——, the widow of a Southern colonel, and has given me the names of a number of wealthy families in the South with whom she claims to be related. Now, I want you to go to Florida and trace the antecedents of this woman and find out how much truth there is in what she has told me about herself.'

"He furnished me with the names of the families with whom she claimed relationship and made out a check for an amount sufficient to cover all the expenses of the trip. I left the senator with the understanding that I would be all ready to leave for the South the following week. He gave me the widow's address in Boston, where she was then living with her two daughters, and told me to be sure to have a good look at her before I started. This was not a difficult thing to do, for I had only to go to her house on some pretense and ask to see her. But when I stood face to face with her I was startled. Only a week before, while I was standing and talking with my detective boarder in Shrief & Chumps's dry-goods store in Boston, this same woman was standing near us at the lace counter when suddenly the clerk accused her of having stolen some lace, and said that she had it hidden under her wrap.

"'Do you suppose she has?' I whispered to Mr. Ryan.

"'Of course,' said he; 'but just watch her and see how nicely she will get out of it. I will tell you about her afterward.' Meanwhile the woman had taken the lace from under her wrap, which she carried over her arm, and was coolly holding it up. 'Is this the lace you missed?' said she. 'How dare you accuse me of stealing it?' Here she turned to the superintendent, who had just come up, and said in the most haughty manner imaginable: 'You know who I am, sir. I have left hundreds of dollars in this store. Do I look like a thief? I wanted to purchase this piece of lace,' she explained, 'and I had been holding it in my hand for nearly half an hour waiting for your clerk

to attend to me, when she suddenly turned on me and accused me of stealing the lace.' The superintendent darted an angry look at the girl and told her that they should be obliged to dispense with her services if any more such mistakes occurred. The girl, fearful of losing her position, at once apologized. 'Say no more,' said the lady, 'I will forgive you this time, but pray don't make any more such foolish mistakes. And now,' she added, 'if you have time to wait upon me, I will give you my order for that piece of lace.'

"When we left the store, Mr. Ryan told me she was an old hand at the business, but that no one had ever been able to convict her; that whenever she was detected stealing anything she would always declare that she had intended to purchase the article. She would never steal except in stores where she had spent lots of money and become well known as a customer. You can imagine how astonished I was when I discovered that the accomplished shoplifter and the woman whose history it was to my interest to unravel were one and the same.

"Well, I started for the South, and when I reached the little village where she had lived during her husband's lifetime, I found that the story she had told the senator about her husband and her rich relations was correct in every detail. I learned that she had left the place shortly after her husband's death, taking her two children with her, and that was the last the villagers had ever seen of her. The physician of the family firmly believed that she poisoned her husband, and the belief is shared by a number of others in the place. The feeling about the matter was so strong that finally they had the body dug up in order to examine the stomach for traces of poison, but the remains had become so decomposed that they were unable to make the examination.

"When I got back to Boston and told the senator that the woman's story was perfectly true he seemed greatly relieved. When I told him that her family physician and a number of others believed that she had poisoned her husband, and that she was known to one of Pinkerton's detectives as a shoplifter he was simply horrified. He tried to break the engagement between his son and the widow's daughter, but this was more difficult than he had bargained for. His son swore that he would never give up the girl, and as the girl was as good as she was beautiful, the senator finally gave in and consented to their marriage.

"Shortly after her daughter's marriage the widow became the senator's housekeeper and robbed him right and left. He stood it for some time, but when she decamped, carrying off the family diamonds, he began to think it was time to interfere. He sent for me and told me to follow her up and get the diamonds back. He told me if I could get her to give them to me peaceably to let her go scot free, as he would much rather avoid the scandal of an exposure. But if she should refuse to give them up, said he, or should succeed in disposing of them before I could catch her, I was to have her arrested.

"As I was leaving the house the senator's daughter-in-law came to me and said, with tears in her epes: 'If you catch my mother, for God's sake have her punished to the full extent of the law. She will never be any better. She has been a disgrace to me all my life. My sister and I would have worked our fingers to the bone for her to have kept her straight, and she has hundreds of friends who would help if she would only live right, but she has been like this ever since I can remember, and has led a far more shameful existence than you have any idea of.'

"To cut my story short, I succeeded in getting on the widow's track, and followed her from one town to another until finally we had crossed the borders of California and landed in San Francisco. I spent some time in trying to locate her, and at last I was successful. I was going along Kearney street one day when I caught sight of her coming out of a store. I followed her home, and as she entered the house I went in after her and told her I had come for the senator's diamonds, and that she had better give them up unless she wished to be sent to the penitentiary. She laughed in my face. 'I know you,' she said. 'I remember when you came to see me in Bos-

ton. I hope you don't think I'm afraid of you.'

"I told her she had need to be afraid of me; that I had come for the senator's diamonds, and if she did not give them up at once I should have her arrested. She replied that I had better leave the house before she lost her temper. She spoke in such an ominous tone of voice I knew I had best be on my guard; so I sniffed once or twice and opened my little hand-bag as though looking for a handkerchief and quietly took out my revolver—I had purchased it when I reached San Francisco in view of just such an emergency—and pointing it at her I said very quietly: 'I am not afraid of you, madam. If you offer me any violence I shall have to shoot you in self-defense. Besides, I have an officer stationed outside, who is only waiting my signal to come in and arrest you.'

"'And what if I have disposed of the diamonds?'

"'Then it will be all the worse for you. The senator has given me orders to arrest you if you do not immediately give them up.'

"'And if I give them up, what then?' she asked.

"'If you give them up that will end the matter, and you shall go scot free.'

"She broke out into a perfect tirade of abuse, using the foulest language, but ended by ripping open her dress and taking from her bosom a little leather bag, which she gazed at for a moment, then threw it down, exclaiming sullenly: 'There's the diamonds! Take them and go.' She is now a confirmed opium-eater, and spends nearly all her time in the Chinese opium joints of San Francisco."

Miss Louise Stanley, referred to as having drawn the largest salary ever paid to a female store detective, is a fine-looking woman, rather heavy. She dresses plainly but tastefully. She has made $25,000 as a detective, and owns a large ranch out West. She is about forty years old and looks like a school teacher. She possesses a keen insight into human nature, and her pride in her knowledge and judgment of human nature was the means of awakening her ambition to become a detective. She had some interesting cases during the time she was at Macy's, but the funniest case she ever had was one on which she was employed by the general manager of one of the largest Western railroads. This gentleman stepped into Macy's one morning, asked for Mr. Well, who was the head detective of that establishment, hummed and hawed for a moment, and then said somewhat nervously:

"At the Fifth Avenue Hotel, where I take my meals, there are a couple of young ladies stopping who always take their meals at the same time I do, and their table is next to mine. Whenever I glance at them I find them staring at me, and I can see by their looks that they are always talking about me. I am a little bit hard of hearing and cannot catch what they are saying, but, by George! I am going to find out. Now, if your lady detective will go to this hotel and manage to take her meals at the same table with these young ladies or manage to get possession of the table just back of them so she can hear their conversation and then make a note of whatever they say about me, I will pay her liberally for her trouble, and she will have her three meals a day besides."

This resulted in Miss Stanley making a satisfactory arrangement with the gentleman, and the next day found her sitting at the same table with the young ladies whose conversation she was to listen to and report. They were two boarding-school misses on a vacation and were stopping at the hotel for a few weeks with their mother, who was something of an invalid and generally had her meals served to her in her room.

Miss Stanley glanced across at the opposite table and saw that her employer was already on hand. Her seat at the end of the table enabled her to watch the faces of all three in this little comedy. The young ladies exchanged a number of merry glances, which the railroad manager intercepted with a scowl. And then the battery opened.

"There sits our guy again," said one sister.

"I see him," rejoined the other; "doesn't he look ridiculous?"

"I should say he did. Do you know, he

reminds me of some quadruped I have read of, but I can't think of its name."

"And just look at that everlasting mustache of his. I believe he twists wire into the ends of it. Just see how the ends bob up and down when he eats."

"If he knew how homely it makes him look he would have it shaved off. I do wonder," she added, "how he would look with it off."

"I imagine," said her sister, "that he would look just like the old spinster who takes charge of our dormitories at school."

In this fashion the young ladies rattled on for some time, keeping Miss Stanley so busy taking notes that she could hardly do justice to her dinner.

The next morning the big railway manager called at the store and asked Miss Stanley to show him her notes. When she had produced them he insisted on her reading them out to him. She complied with his request, but was interrupted every few seconds with a sharp "What! Did she say that?" He finally worked himself into such a towering rage that he rushed from the store before she had finished reading her report. He came back again in a little while and had her finish reading them, and then told her that she was to go to the hotel again and that she should be *sure* and write down everything they said about him.

This went on for nearly two weeks. Every morning Miss Stanley would read her reports to her employer, and each time she would do so the big railroad manager would work himself into a rage, and with his face almost purple with passion he would reiterate: "Did she say that?" and would wind up by calling them "little huzzies." But one morning the railroad man took it into his head that Miss Stanley was imposing on him and had been guying him all the time. It was just after she had finished reading her note-book that one of the young ladies had expressed it as her firm opinion that he must have lost all his back teeth, as it always took him such an awful long time to eat anything."

"That will do," said the railroad manager; "stop right there, I have had enough of this. Now, I am willing to pay you your own price for your services, but, first, you must go with me before a notary public and make an affidavit that the notes you have been reading to me about what those young ladies said about me are perfectly correct and not the least bit exaggerated." This was done, and Miss Stanley was amply repaid for her trouble.

Another bright detective was Miss Carrie Melville Conners. She had been employed on a number of cases by Detective L. A. Newcombe, ex-post-office inspector. She was a pretty girl of medium size, with brown hair and eyes of the same color. She was but twenty-four years old, intelligent and possessed a great many accomplishments; not the least of them her skill in the kitchen. Whenever she worked up a case she always made a sketch of the criminal and of the different places she visited. Mr. Newcombe called her his artist-detective. He had another woman detective whom he called "Old Molly." She was all of fifty years old and very plain. She had a magnificent figure, however, and was as strong as any two ordinary men. She had tracked some of the lowest criminals in the country and been the means of bringing them to justice. She was unmarried and likely to remain so, as she entertained the strongest hatred for mankind in general. But the most surprising thing about her was that, with all her masculine ways and her constant intercourse with hardened criminals, she was as feminine as the daintiest woman in the land in her home surroundings. She lived in a handsome flat on the west side and spent time and money in furnishing it. An air of elegance pervaded it, and a hundred delicate knick-knacks lay about which made it look more like the home of some young girl than of an ugly old woman. Old Molly and Miss Conners once worked up a case together. The client in the case was Mr. T. Houston, then manager of three large railroads. A certain stockholder had persistently sent a number of anonymous letters to the friends of Mr. Houston, defaming his character, and then sent letters to Mr. Houston himself, telling him that for a certain sum of money he would desist. Mr. Houston final-

ly went to Detective Newcombe about it, and the case was given to Old Molly and Miss Conners, who were to work it up together.

They went to the hotel where this blackmailer was stopping and engaged a suite of the best rooms in the house, Old Molly acting as chaperon to Miss Conners. Chance soon gave Miss Conners an opportunity to become acquainted with the man. He was married, but this did not prevent him from becoming infatuated with Miss Conners, and one day he begged her to elope with him. Meantime Miss Conners, who had been skilfully leading him on, had won from him a confession of his blackmailing scheme, and when he asked her to elope with him, she told him she would do so if he would write a letter retracting the charges he had made against Mr. Houston's character. She had difficulty in getting him to do this, but finally he became so desperately in love with her that it required but little more persuasion on her part, and her object was gained. The letter was written, and in it he acknowledged having sent anonymous letters to Mr. Houston's friends, and confessed that the charges he had made against that gentleman were utterly false. Miss Conners had made him sign his name in full, and the letter was in her possession. That night Miss Conners slept under her own roof, and the next day the stockholder disappeared. Realizing that his game was up, he lost no time in getting away.

There was a woman detective in Broad street who had been in the business for thirteen years. She kept a detective agency and had a large number of male and female detectives in her employ, of whom the male portion were employed on robbery and blackmailing cases, while the females were used for divorce cases. She was about thirty-five years old, plump and had a prosperous appearance, which betokened that she and Dame Fortune were on friendly terms. She had been twice married, and her name was Mrs. Mary J. Tompkins, but she carried on her business under the name of her former husband, a Mr. Bryan.

"The first detective work I ever did," said Mrs. Tompkins, "was years ago, when I worked up cases for Capt. John Irving, who was then inspector at police headquarters. I worked for him two years and then I started in business for myself. I am the only woman in the United States who keeps a detective agency."

Probably the most superior lady detective in the point of personal appearance and intellectuality was one whose professional name was Anna Wilson. She was fine-looking, with an air of refinement about her, a haughtiness of manner blended with a sweetness and amiability of disposition that rarely are combined in one person. Mrs. Wilson shrunk from publicity, and it was with no little difficulty that one succeeded in getting her to tell about herself. She was not regularly employed by any agency, her work being mostly among the wealthy families of New York, who sent for her whenever they gave a big reception or had a swell wedding. Her home before she came to New York was in Boston, where she was left a widow. Feeling the necessity of looking out for herself she came here and became a book agent. She always went among the wealthiest families. In this way she got some kind-hearted ladies interested in her. Having done a piece of detective work for one of them, for which service she was liberally rewarded, she made up her mind to do detective work altogether, as there was a much better income to be made by it. The lady to whom she had rendered the service gave a reception not long after and engaged Mrs. Wilson to come there and see that everything was well taken care of. Her patroness got her friends interested in her, and afterward Mrs. Wilson was making a handsome income by doing detective work for them.

"But there is one disagreeable thing about it," said Mrs. Wilson, "and that is that I am obliged to live two lives, as it were. For instance, at my boarding-place, where I live, of course, under my own name, I am supposed to be a book agent still. If it should leak out that I was a detective they would shun me almost as much as if I was some red-handed murderess. And yet I consider I am just as much of a lady as a detective as when I was a book agent."

"The Coward"

by Beulah Poynter

AT the second ring of the bell Mrs. Castleton dropped the silver and gold-chased hairbrush she was holding and turned away from her dressing-table, her blue-gray eyes a trifle widened and her lips parted. She gave a little gasp as she met the intent stare of her maid, Nadine, who just then entered the room, closing the door cautiously behind her.

"The bell——" began the lady.

"Shall I answer it?" Nadine asked, her gaze never leaving the expressive face of her mistress.

Mrs. Castleton wavered, a gray pallor swept from the tip of her cleft chin to the edge of her copper-colored hair, which tumbled about her shoulders in thick, undulating coils. For a moment she seemed unable to speak, and the hands which pulled the folds of her heavily embroidered silk kimono about her trembled visibly.

A very faint smile crept around the maid's thin lips, her black eyes closed speculatively, then shifted toward the dressing-table with its rose-colored lamp shades, from it to the rose-colored satin and lace-covered bed with the open suitcase upon it, then to the traveling gown ready to step into and back to the pallid woman herself.

Again the bell jangled.

"I thought you were in bed, Nadine," Mrs. Castleton stammered. Her chin quivered, and she placed one small jeweled hand over her lips as she spoke.

Nadine shook her head. "Shall I open the door?" she persisted.

"It's almost one o'clock. Who can be calling at this hour? I—I don't think it's safe."

The maid laughed. "Burglars don't ring the front-door bell," she said with a touch of what might have been insolence. "It may be a telegram or a friend calling, even if it is late. Something may have happened. If you are afraid there is your revolver." She picked it up from the dressing-table and extended it toward her mistress.

Mrs. Castleton reached for the pistol, but it slipped from her fingers and fell to the floor with a clatter. Nadine stooped quickly, lifted it up and placed it in the cold hand of the woman.

"Maybe it's the chauffeur ringing," she said, still appraising the preparations for departure.

"No—no. What makes you think I'm going anywhere? I'm not leaving until morning."

Nadine sniffed. "I'll go to the door,"

she said; "we can't any more than be killed."

A second later the maid returned. There was a quizzical half smile about her lips, a sort of apology for her mistress's cowardice.

"There's a girl out there. She gave her name as Miss Lambert. She said you'd know who she was even if you didn't know her personally, for she's a friend of the Folsoms."

"Lambert!" The color flooded back into Ada Castleton's face. She replaced the revolver upon her dressing-table, and taking up a pin, twisted her hair into a knot at the back of her head. "She is the Folsoms' ward. But they are in Europe. I wonder what the child can want at this hour?"

The maid still hesitated in the doorway. "Shall I bring her in or——"

"Why, yes, yes, of course. There must be something wrong, or she wouldn't be here. Take her into the drawing-room." Nadine turned. "No, Nadine, bring her here. On second thought, I would rather see her here."

When the maid again closed the door behind her Mrs. Castleton crossed quickly to the bed, snapped the lid of the suitcase and, flinging aside her kimono, wriggled into the outspread traveling gown. There was more composure in her attitude when she turned to meet her visitor.

Nadine withdrew without a word, but nothing about the slim girl she ushered into the room escaped her, and while she closed the door of the bedroom behind her she did not move far away.

"Miss Lambert?" Ada Castleton extended her hand, and with a nervous giggle the girl placed her own in it. She was a little thing with round brown eyes and an almost babyish face shaded by clouds of dun-colored hair. A long cape of black Canton crape edged with gray fur enveloped her slender body, and she held it wrapped about her with one small dimpled fist.

"I must apologize for intruding at such an ungodly hour," she said as Mrs. Castleton relinquished her grasp and motioned to her to be seated. "But what must you think of me when you never saw me before and——"

"I've heard Dolly Folsom speak of you so often I feel as if I knew you," replied the older woman; "but—well, frankly, you've aroused my curiosity." She glanced toward her wrist watch as she spoke.

The girl noticed her action.

"Oh, you were going some place; I'm detaining you!" she exclaimed contritely.

"Oh, no, no." The protest was too emphatic to ring true. "May I ring for some tea—or supper? I think Nadine is still up—er—come, tell me, I am burning to know why a child like you is out at such an hour alone!"

"May I?" The girl removed her turban and unloosened the fur about her throat. "Well, you see I came into town unexpectedly, intending to spend the night with—er—Aunt Dolly. Imagine my consternation when I found the house closed up and not a soul about."

"They've gone to Europe. I saw Dolly a week ago, and she told me they were sailing Thursday."

"So—well, they might have let me know! Since I've been in school I don't count in their lives!" she pouted prettily. "Well, I tried to go to a hotel, but they wouldn't take me in, a girl alone; you understand? I was just about frantic. I didn't know what to do. It's too cold to sleep on a bench in the park, even if I wasn't such a cowardly calf; then suddenly I remembered that Mrs. Folsom—er—Aunt Dolly often spoke of you. I looked in the telephone directory and found your address. And—well, here I am. Please may I spend the night with you?"

She rose and advanced toward her hostess in a pretty, childish manner, her soft red lips half open, her eyes pleading. Mrs. Castleton drew a deep breath; she stared in an almost dull way at the piquant face before her.

"Of course you may stay, child; I couldn't think of turning you out at this hour." She swallowed painfully as though the word stuck in her throat. "I'll ring for Nadine to show you to a room."

"Nadine?" the girl queried a trifle abruptly.

"My maid—the one who let you in."

"Oh! Need you disturb her? Surely she has gone to bed. It's so late. Mayn't I just camp here?" She indicated a chaise longue piled with downy cushions with a wave of her hand.

"I—I"—Mrs. Castleton stumbled over the words—"I'm afraid not, dear; you see I am leaving early in the morning for Palm Beach and——"

"Palm Beach!" The girl laughed musically. "Palm Beach in May! Isn't it awfully late in the season? I believe—I actually believe you are going to-night, or should I say morning? It is morning now, isn't it?" She dropped into the luxurious depths of the bed and, hugging her knees, rested her pointed chin upon them.

Mrs. Castleton shrugged her shoulders impatiently. "You've guessed it," she admitted. "I—was just going to take a taxi to the Grand Central when you arrived. My train leaves at two o'clock."

"Oh, and I'm keeping you! How horrid of me! I'm so sorry!" The girl sprang abruptly to her feet, accidentally knocking the closed bag to the floor. Mrs. Castleton gave a cry and bent toward it, but her guest lifted it before she could touch it; at the same time, as though unconscious of what she was doing, the girl pressed a spring, and the suitcase opened.

Its owner faced her with a defiant expression. "Give it to me!" she commanded, all cordiality gone from her voice.

The girl stiffened; she seemed to grow taller, and the soft contour of her face became as hard as that of the woman who faced her. "Just as I thought," she said.

"What do you mean?"

The girl laughed. Her laugh was as steely cold as the glint in her eyes. "You're a clever woman, Ada Castleton, but it takes a damn clever one to be a crook, and you're not damn clever!"

"Why—why—what are you saying? That I—that——"

"You heard me. You can't bluff! I'm wise!"

"You—you aren't——"

"The Lambert kid? Don't make me laugh! If you'd keep up with the social doings as much as I do, you'd know that the little Lambert kid is at sea now with the Folsom family! No, dearie, I don't belong in your bunch at all! But I took a long chance on your not being up to all that's printed in society magazines!"

"Give me that bag!" The woman whirled quickly, reaching for the dangerous toy on her dressing-table.

"Drop it! Drop it! I mean business!" From somewhere in the folds of her cape the girl brought forth a revolver. She held it unflinchingly on a level with the woman's head. "Now get me straight, dearie. You're a crook and I'm a crook, and we're both after the same thing, only you got a reputation to keep up, and I've lost mine!"

"How dare you! I don't know what you are talking about!" the woman sobbed in her chagrin and terror.

"You don't! Then I'll give you an earful. No, let the pretty little pistol stay put and keep away from the telephone! I can talk better with you in the middle of the floor. It's this way, dearie; the fashionable Mrs. Castleton being a natural gambler goes in a little too heavy in the bridge game, and consequently gets up to her neck in debt. Hubby doesn't approve of said pastime, creditors get busy, hubby goes out of town, little wife gets busy, pulls the grand robbery stunt, 'Me jewels have been filched!' and all the bunk that insurance companies that ought to know better fall for. They come across with the dough, wifie secrets the sparklers some place for safe-keeping until all the talk blows over, and—— Are you following me?"

"Preposterous! I was robbed. Robbed of everything I possessed except these!" She held up her trembling hands heavily laden with rings.

"That so? And you got a tidy little sum, too, didn't you? Well, dearie, if they took away everything that you owned, what are you guarding so carefully in this bag?" She reached into the satchel and lifted from its depths a small black sack.

"Who are you? How did you know?"

the woman wailed, breaking down completely. "Are you a detective?"

"A dick? Me? You are a lamb! No, I told you I was a crook! I suppose you are like the rest of your set, and think that we go about with a gat, a mask and a jimmy! No, chica, I don't do any rough stuff! I keep my eyes peeled, read the papers and know what is doing. When the newsy suddenly blazed the fact that you'd been robbed of seventy thousand dollars' worth of sparklers I rubbed my blinkers. When the insurance boobs came across with fifty thousand golden beans I says to myself, 'Susie, old top, watch the lady; she'll beat it for furrin parts one of these fine days, fifty thousand to the good and seventy thousands' worth of jewels in her jeans!' Was I right? I'll say I was. Light my coffin nail, dearie; I can't strike a match and hold my hand steady." She thrust a cigarette between her teeth as she spoke.

"What do you want? Blackmail?" cried the woman hysterically, and almost on the point of crying.

"Not a bit of it. You advertised the fact that you'd been robbed; I just want to prove that you aren't a liar! I've got the jewels in my mitt, and I'm going to keep them. So what can you do about it? But just in case you don't know when you're well off, I want you to step inside of that closet, close it and your eyes until I beat it, and then forget our little transaction." She rose leisurely, the smile still wreathing her lips, but her eyes were hard and the smile did not extend to them.

"You mean you are going to take my diamonds after—after I have made a cheat of myself, after I struggled so hard to save them? No, I'll not let you do it! You shan't! You shan't!" Her voice rose to a shriek, and giving a lurch forward, she flung out her hand, knocking the revolver from the girl's grasp and clutching frantically at the black sack the other held. "I'll telephone for the police! I don't care what happens!" she panted, "but you shan't have them!"

The girl gave a triumphant little chuckle as she evaded the frantic woman; she backed around the room, holding the bag above her head and slowly worked her way toward the built-in closet.

"You'll change your mind, dearie, when they hand you a prison sentence! Better lose your sparklers than your liberty! Take it from me, I know!"

The woman hesitated. She stood facing her opponent, wavering between her fear and the desire to save her property; then she lifted the receiver from the hook, straightening with determination as her fingers touched the telephone.

"You'll lose your liberty also," she said grimly.

Like a young panther, the girl sprang. The receiver jangled to the table, and the impetus of her blow threw the woman backwards, causing her to fall, stunned by the suddenness of the onslaught. The girl grasped the sack tightly against her bosom, gave a hurried glance toward the hall door, and then jumped out of the window, which opened onto the fire-escape.

Mrs. Castleton raised herself painfully upon one elbow. Slowly she dragged herself to her feet, disappointed sobs racking her slender frame. "They're gone! They're gone!" Staggering to the bed, she dropped into it, and burying her face in her hands gave way to the angry hysteria she felt.

The door opened, and the quiet, noncommittal maid stepped into the room. Without a word she walked over to her mistress and, sitting down beside her, placed one hand in a sympathetic gesture upon her knee. The woman started, dropped her hands from her streaming eyes and tried to dry her tears.

"Nadine! Nadine!" she stammered, "I've been robbed!"

"I know. I was outside the door!"

"And you didn't come to help me."

"I heard what she said about your fooling the insurance company and robbing yourself!"

"But you don't know why I did it, Nadine. It was wrong, I know, but——"

"I know why you did it—because of vanity and—your man; because you wanted to be prettier than any other woman that he saw and you didn't have enough money

to keep up with the artificial crowd you——"

"I love him, Nadine, and if he learns the truth he'll never forgive me."

"Kind of a risky way to keep a man's love, isn't it? Deceit and such like? Wouldn't it a-been better to have told him why you gambled, even if you lost, than to have made a thief of yourself?" There was no reproach in the maid's voice, only tender pity, and she patted the hand she held in a motherly way.

"I didn't mean to be a thief! I didn't think of it that way. I'm only borrowing the money; I intended to pay it back when I got ahead again. And I could, too."

"But now your jewels are gone!"

"Yes. And, oh, Nadine, she's right; I can't notify the police!"

"If you had 'em again would you give back the money and say that you had found them, or had 'em returned to you?"

"What do you mean?" The woman turned with sudden hope toward her maid.

"Would you?" Nadine persisted.

"Yes, I think I would. I know I would. I guess I'm not clever, and I've been so afraid all the time. I can't go through with it; Nadine, I'm not brave; I'm a coward!"

"That's how I knew you hadn't been robbed," said the maid grimly, "and why I made up my mind to save you. Even a brave crook gets caught before he's finished, and, as you say, you aren't a brave one. I wasn't going to let you get caught."

"What do you mean? Save me?"

"When I learned you were going away, honey—for I learned it, even if you did try to hide the fact—I knew you had your diamonds with you. I made it my business to find out where you hid them and to exchange them for your imitation ones."

"My imitation! The paste stones! Then the girl——"

"She got the phony ones, yes."

"But the real stones?" The woman's voice broke in her excitement.

The maid laughed. She put her hand in the bosom of her black frock and pulled out a little sack similar to the one that had just been stolen. "They're here. I was going to hand them over to the insurance company myself; now it's up to you to do it, or else give back the money; if you don't——"

"If I don't——"

"I'll have to tell Tim, my sweetheart, the truth. You see, he was hired by the insurance company to watch you; they had their suspicions, too. Tim is a detective. That is why I'm so wise."

JEWEL BOX THAT WILL SCARE THIEVES

AMONG the newest things that German inventors have sent us in the last few months is a box that comes as near to being burglar-proof as it is possible to imagine. It looks like an ordinary steel box with a keyhole in its side. Bt just lift it or move it and a loud alarm bell begins ringing for five hours and it cannot be stopped without unlocking the box.

A burglar might carry off the box, but its alarm would keep on ringing, and would give him away before he could get it to a place of safety. If he touches it, even stumbles against it, the alarm will arouse the household, for the slightest movement suffices to set it ringing. The same of course is true of the dishonest servant.

The owner can, however, open and close the box at will, as he has the key. And the only way in which he can be robbed is by some thief stealing the key before tampering with the box.

This safe is arranged inside with trays for small articles, money and jewelry, and with space under them for securities, such as bonds and mortgages. The whole is made of seamless steel, nickel-plated, with a piano hinge and strong double lock. There are no duplicate keys, nor is there a master key that will open it.

The Fatal Instinct

By HOWARD PHILIP RHOADES

DETECTIVE DAVID ROE, from headquarters, who stood over the body of the dead man, a pistol of unusual pattern in his hands, turned to Policeman Farrell. "What do you know about this, officer?" he questioned.

"I was called from the Linden Garden station," said the man in uniform, "by the butler. He said his master, Mr. Gonzales, knew Mr. Everett was coming and feared him. He asked me to come to the house. I waited in another room until Everett came. As the butler sent Everett to this room he signaled me to approach and remain close outside the door. I had not reached it when there was a cry inside. Everett opened the door, this revolver in his hand. There was smoke in the room. Mr. Gonzales was lying just as you see him."

Detective Roe bent over the body, his long, lean face as passive and unemotional as his gray eyes were quick. "Two wounds," he said. "One through the left eye cavity, the other a trifle lower. Two chambers of this gun have been fired. To whom does it belong?"

Roe asked the policeman the question. But as the latter shook his head the eyes of the detective shifted around the little group. They centered at last upon the face of Henry Everett, who had been discovered with the revolver in his hand. Everett's face was pale and his features perturbed as he strove to speak. Even though his lips trembled when he finally found words, the steady brown eyes of the tall, well-built young man were unflinching as he returned the detective's glance.

"It belongs to me," he said in a low voice.

"You shot him!" said Roe.

Everett shook his head. "As I came into the room," he said, "Gonzales lay there dead. The revolver was at my feet. I picked it up as one will without thinking. A man was just climbing up to the window. I yelled at him. He jumped out."

"How about this, officer?" asked Roe.

"He told me," admitted the policeman. "But I've been alone and couldn't investigate."

"Keep every one as they are," ordered Roe, hurrying toward the front door of the large Long Island bungalow in which the killing had occurred. "I'll be back in a moment."

Armed with a flashlight, the detective crossed the lawn to a point below the designated window in the room in which Genzales had been killed. His lips parted in eagerness as he saw that there was a large flower-bed beneath the window. It took but a moment to locate a pair of deep shoe marks where some one, jumping from the window above, had landed. A few feet away, where the shoes had made the prints of a man hurrying rapidly off, Roe swiftly measured and examined them. Then he went back inside.

He was met at the door by a well-groomed, grayish, elderly man. In tones of anxiety the latter asked: "Were there signs outside?"

"Yes," said Roe. "Some one jumped from the window recently, it appears."

"May I introduce myself," said the other. "I am Palmer Newton, a very close friend of Mr. Everett. In fact, he is to become my son-in-law. There are a few phases of this case, Mr. Roe, that I would like to give you in confidence."

"Certainly," said Roe. He gave orders to Policeman Farrell and another uniformed man who had appeared to lock all doors and allow nobody to leave. Beside

Henry Everett there was the butler, Pedro, a squat, dark-faced man, who paced the floor wringing his hands, and a girl, who sat bowed and weeping. She was on a luxuriant davenport beside Everett, her pale hands in his, her slender lines revealed by her black evening dress. Her delicate face was filled with anxiety as she looked at Mr. Newton.

He laid a hand reassuringly upon her shoulder and whispered: "Courage, dear. It's going to be all right." Then. with a smile to Everett, Newton followed Detective Roe into another room.

"Mr. Roe," he began, "you find Henry Everett under suspicious circumstances. There is no doubt of that. But he no more murdered Paul Gonzales than you did. They have been partners in an importing business, Everett attending to the selling and Gonzales doing the purchasing abroad."

"Gonzales was of foreign origin?"

"Of mixed Latin blood. He claimed no particular country, but knew the Mediterranean and South America intimately. He had been associated with Everett less than two years. Recently—this is told in confidence—there had been financial troubles. In his travels Gonzales had been spending excessively. For a time he kept this hidden. Then something——" He halted, as if undecided whether to go on.

"Proceed, Mr. Newton. Anything you tell me remains a secret—for the present at least."

"Thanks, Mr. Roe. You see this strikes close home. But you must know for a thorough understanding. As a matter of fact, Gonzales had paid attentions to my daughter. He was an accomplished charmer, and for a time my daughter was much taken with him. Then, when I started to investigate the way Gonzales was using the firm's money—I am legal counsel as well as being interested in the business—I learned things which made me insist that my daughter have nothing further to do with Gonzales. This precipitated a crisis. Last week we accused Gonzales. He threatened violence and left the office. We wrote, giving him until to-night to start to make his shortage good."

"Mr. Everett telephoned him this evening?"

"No. That story about Everett's threatening him over the telephone is merely one of Gonzales's falsehoods. Gonzales called on us. All three parties, you see, have been living here in Linden Garden. Gonzales had rented this bungalow furnished, I live in a summer home on the hill, and Mr. Everett has an apartment at Tremont Arms. My daughter and I were dining there with Mr. Everett. Gonzales telephoned asking Everett to come to his home and hinting he wanted to settle. My daughter begged Everett to be careful.

"Did Everett expect trouble?"

"I—I don't know."

"Did he make any comment?"

Newton thought a moment. Then he said with some hesitation: "Yes, merely to reassure my daughter, I think, he said he would go armed."

"Do you know whether he did or did not carry his revolver?"

"His statement is that he thought better of the plan and decided not to take it. He says the last time he saw the gun, before picking it up in Gonzales's room, was several days ago, when it was in a drawer in his apartment. I've never had grounds to doubt a word Everett has told me."

"I hope his statement is true, Mr. Newton. But always remember that in cases of such seriousness sometimes even the most truthful——"

"Totally unbelievable, Mr. Roe," said Newton stiffly. "Is there anything else I can help you with?"

"For the moment, no," said the detective. "Let's go back to Everett."

They returned to the long living-room. Everett and Viola Newton still were side by side upon the davenport. Everett rose nervously as they entered. "I should like you to go with me for a little, Mr. Everett," said Roe.

The girl, her blue eyes tearful, her mouth drooping pathetically, caught Everett's hand and pressed it to her cheek.

"Only to his apartment for the present," said Roe. "I'll be ready in a moment." Then quickly, with great care, he went over

the ground, noting the positions of doors, windows, furniture. He made a hurried search through chests, chiffoniers and other things. So far as they noted he took only one thing, a blue piece of paper from Gonzales's desk.

One moment more he lingered to usher a coroner's deputy into the room where the body was lying upon the floor. A last time he bent over the face of Gonzales, dark even in the pallor of death, the thick sensual lips flecked with blood. What story would those lips tell if they could speak? Would they blame Henry Everett, the man who escaped out the window, or some other person as yet unsuspected?

"I'm ready," said Roe, leaving the policemen to lock up the house and to hold Pedro, the butler, as a witness. The detective took Everett with him in his police car and started for Tremont Arms. He was followed by Palmer Newton and his daughter in the machine which had hurriedly brought them to the Gonzales bungalow shortly before when news of the tragedy had reached them.

Twenty minutes after his arrival at Tremont Arms Detective Roe was back at the curb with Everett. As Newton, who had been waiting in his own car, approached the detective said: "I've a hurried trip to New York to make, Mr. Newton. For the present I shall put Mr. Everett under detention."

Viola Newton hid her face. Her father asked: "May I speak to him before he goes?"

"He is not at liberty to tell what happened in his room. But he may bid you and Miss Newton good-by."

At the station-house the older man gripped the hand of the younger with renewed assurances of his faith. Everett took the girl in his arms, kissed her, and comforted her as best he could. Newton tarried still a moment after Roe had returned to the street.

"You can see what clearing him means to me, Mr. Roe," said the elderly man. "I'm sure he can't be guilty."

"Yet, if he were guilty, you'd want to be the first to know."

"Yes," the other admitted, "and the waiting is going to be maddening. If there was just something I could do. Couldn't I ride to the city with you, Mr. Roe? But perhaps you desire to be alone."

"Not necessarily," said the other. "I don't know how this is going to pan out. Perhaps something might occur to you that I should know. So, if you care to come along, I'll be glad to have you."

Sending his daughter home in his own car, Newton got in beside the detective. After a fast ride across part of Long Island the police-car struck Queensborough Bridge entering New York. Breaking a long silence, Newton said: "If I may be permitted to know, Mr. Roe, are we on the trail of the man who jumped from the window?"

Roe's eyes twinkled in his long, lean, mask-like face. "That remains to be seen," he said. "But at least I hope we are on the trail of a man who had something very definite to do with the killing of Gonzales."

At Lexington avenue Roe stopped the machine and went into a cigar store. Newton saw him enter a telephone booth. Two or three minutes later he returned and guided the car westward through Fifty-seventh street. They crossed Broadway, Eighth avenue and plunged into the upper West Side.

"Any progress?" asked Newton, drawing hope from the speed and decision with which Roe drove.

"Can't tell yet," said the other, swerving southward around the structure of the Ninth Avenue elevated and peering through the darkness for numbers. A moment later he again leaped out of the machine and left Newton.

This time the wait was longer. But when Roe returned the other man fancied he found in the mask-like face the keenness of pursuit. In fact, as the car swept south, gradually crossing by way of Broadway and Lafayette street into the eastern half of the lower city, the detective actually smiled.

"We're playing in luck, Mr. Newton," he said. "That's the proper expression to use, I think, when a police detective lines something up. Headwork, they say, is for private detectives and those of fiction. But

let's not crow. We've something lined, nor caught!"

Swinging near Little Italy, they reached the point where the elevated railroads of the East Side tie themselves into a noisy giant knot above the drabness of Chatham Square. Roe drew his machine to the curb. "Safe enough here, I guess," he said, "with a lock and a police sign on it. But I wouldn't leave you here, Mr. Newton. Come along. It's hard to say when I'll get back."

Past the narrow slit of Pell street, ushering one to Chinatown, across the Bowery, thick with human wrecks from five continents and seven seas, they fared, taking presently a narrow street leading into the dark and forbidding region toward the East River. Newton instinctively drew a little nearer the side of the tall detective. Every shabby shadow slinking home to its tenement to him was a dark-browed gangster.

At last, deep among tall, frowning houses, Detective Roe halted. Indicating a police callbox, he said: "In ten minutes, I hope there will be a policeman here to report to headquarters."

The district officer appeared on schedule. "Tell them you're going with me a while," said Roe, after he had talked with the man. "Have them put a substitute on your district."

A moment later all three proceeded down the street. At the end of a dark block they came to an areaway which was blackness itself. Feeling their way through a rubbish-heaped back yard, they at last reached a flight of stairs leading down to a basement door. Down this the district officer stepped and knocked at the battered portal.

After a little some one inside stirred. Presently the door was opened a crack. Over a small chain which safeguarded the door against being forced entirely open a white-bearded, frowsy old man stared out. When he recognized the policeman he apologized brokenly and invited the uniformed officer inside. Presently they reappeared and the old man pointed upward.

Detective Roe drew the policeman to him with a nod and ordered in a low voice: "You stay with the old man. He might tip off our party. Don't leave him until you hear from me. What floor is it?"

"Third. The window directly over this one."

While the uniformed man and the old caretaker turned back into the untidy basement, Roe and Newton risked their lives on a ramshackle fire-escape, rusted thin and palsied. Softly they crept up to the third floor. Roe felt about in the darkness. Once or twice he strained at a window. Then it creaked and slid.

The detective was in like a cat. One moment he played his flashlight all over the place, then turned back to the window. "Come in," he whispered to Newton. He lent a hand as the older man crossed the sill. When Newton was safe inside Roe drew down the two shredded blinds on the windows and again shot his flashlight across the room.

On one side was the wreck of an iron bed with a few soiled bits of covering. In a corner was a chair, and the only other furniture was a faded dresser. Its drawers yielded only a few odds and ends of clothing and some worthless trinkets. The bed, the walls, the floor the detective examined with no apparent success. At last he said: "We'll have to wait a while."

He gave the chair to Mr. Newton and made himself comfortable on one end of the bed pulled close to the door. For hours, it seemed, they waited. Then Roe crossed the room to the other man. "Maybe you'd sooner go home," he said, "or wait downstairs with the officer. We may stay here all night for nothing."

"No, I'll remain. Besides my personal interest, I'm enjoying it!"

Only when the first faint gloom of dawn filtered through the torn blinds was there a step on the stairs. Roe swiftly passed Newton the flashlight.

"Give me light," he said, "the moment I call for it." Already some one was fumbling with the lock. The door opened. A second later there was an inarticulate cry and the sound of struggling. "Light!" ordered Roe. The white ray Newton summoned showed the detective smashing down

upon the bed a thin, undersized, hatchet-faced youth.

His quarry handcuffed, Detective Roe tore down the blinds and asked Newton to bring the policeman from below. The latter at his side, Roe began carefully to search the captured man. From feeling his pockets on the outside Roe dove into them, bringing out a dirty miscellany, which he laid upon the table.

Newton thought, as the detective proceeded with the search, that he discerned through the mask-like face of the pursuer of criminals a growing disappointment. Finally after not only going through every pocket, but feeling every lining from end to end, there remained only a worn flat wallet. It was quickly searched. Only two dollars as shabby and soiled as their owner were inside. His brows knitted, Detective Roe fingered the empty wallet from end to end.

He turned to the undersized youth, who had been eyeing him ferret-like, with brief hesitation. Then he grabbed the worn, checkered cap from the insignificant brow of his prisoner and felt it from end to end. It gave up nothing—but an inspiration.

Dropping the cap suddenly, Detective Roe shot his strong fingers into the long, thick, matted hair of his prisoner. With a whine the youth dodged, but did not escape. The detective, holding with one hand as he might have to a woolly dog, plunged the fingers of his other hand deeper into the matted hair. Suddenly he gave a vigorous pull, which drew a sharp cry of pain from his prisoner. Then, freeing the man, he carefully examined something which he had wrenched from the hair of his prisoner's head.

"Take him to headquarters, officer," said Roe, "and have him marked 'Hold for Roe.' I want to take him out to Linden Garden later in the morning. But now I've another errand. You're fagged out, Mr. Newton. I think you'd better take a train home and try to get some sleep. If all goes well I'll be out before noon, and then we'll see."

Detective Roe didn't say what they'd see. Newton, who took a train from Pennsylvania station a little later, wondered. He found Everett pale and wakeful in a corridor of the suburban police station. The older man limited his message to the younger merely to encouragement, as Everett, under suspicion of murder, was allowed to talk to nobody.

At his home on the hill Newton found his daughter red-eyed and sleepless. He tried to put a comforting construction on the events of the latter part of the night, and then retired to get some rest against the appearance of Roe.

At ten he received a message from the detective, saying that he was leaving the Gonzales bungalow for the station-house where Everett was detained. There he said he would like to meet Newton.

Twenty minutes later Detective Roe and Palmer Newton sat in the office of the police captain who was in charge. Viola Newton, who had accompanied her father, was waiting in an outer office. Henry Everett was pacing the corridor, awaiting his call.

But before he was summoned a turnkey brought before Roe, the captain, and Mr. Newton the thin, hatchet-faced individual who had been slated as William Casey, alias Willy the Bum. As the latter took a seat across the table from Roe in the captain's office the detective looked at the thin, unkempt youth in wonderment.

His tones were severe, but not without a tinge of pity, as he said to Casey: "Willy, I'm surprised at you. I've known you for years, but I never doped you as a killer."

"Me?" Casey started to gasp, growing paler.

"Don't interrupt. The goods are on you so plain you might as well come clean. Yesterday afternoon you ransacked Mr. Everett's apartment. That didn't surprise me. You're a good sneak thief. You must have gotten your tip on both these men from the same place. They're partners. But you find the second one at home; he resists, and you shoot him with the gun you stole in the afternoon from his partner's apartment."

"I didn't break in to steal," whined Willy the Bum. "I went on business."

Roe laughed sarcastically. "Went in the window to pay a business call?"

"I went in the side door. Didn't you find it unlocked?"

"That proves nothing."

"It does. Gonzales knew I was coming. He left that side door open so his butler wouldn't see me."

"He certainly framed himself letting *you* in secretly!" said Roe. "If you were on business when you quarreled and shot him——"

"Was I the only one around there?" cried Casey. "Listen: I hid in the hall to make sure the way to his room was clear. Pretty soon this butler comes out. I figures Gonzales is alone and I hurry in. As I open the door there's a shot—two shots——"

"Go on!" ordered Roe sharply. "What did you do?"

"Do? Why I bent over Gonzales as he laid on the floor and looked for what I was after."

"Did you get it?"

"No. There was another man; I was scared of being grabbed and beat it out of the window."

Roe surveyed the hatchet-faced youth in scorn. "Willy," he cried, "you insult my intelligence. You mean to sit there, a known thief and a desperate character, a man who came to Gonzales's house to rob, armed with his partner's gun, and try to make me think——"

"I tell you I didn't break in. I came on business."

The quiet, passive face of Detective Roe filled with sudden heat. "Casey!" he cried impatiently, "I'm tired of this. You're spinning lies as fast as you can talk. It won't take me a minute to slam you in a cell with a murder charge against you. You've been in trouble dozens of times. You've done time often. Now, if you want to escape the chair, come clean quick!"

The imperturbable mask of Roe was lost behind a countenance of agitated determination. He looked as if he were going to grab Casey and throttle him as he jerked out the last words. The lean little police character became ashen.

He trembled, blue-lipped, as he whined: "I had business, I tell you."

"What business?" cried Roe in a terrible voice.

"He was going to pay me for breaking into Everett's house and bringing him that revolver."

"Everett's own revolver, with which Gonzales shot himself and then tossed toward the door where Everett would pick it up as he entered?"

"Yes."

"This is true before God and these witnesses?"

"It is."

"All right. Did you get that, stenographer?"

"Yes, sir," came a voice from behind a near-by screen.

"That's all for Willy," said Roe. "Charge him with burglary and grand larceny." As the prisoner was led away Roe turned to the others.

"I complimented Willy," he said, "when I called him desperate and accused of murder. He's just a clever sneak thief with a broad yellow streak. The best way to get him to admit the minor charge was to scare him with the greater one. His story is true. Gonzales had two good reasons to want to die—maybe three. His defalcations were discovered. He had lost the girl. He hated Everett, to whom he charged both of these. Last night he told his butler Everett had threatened him and sent for a policeman. The officer was to stand outside the door when Everett entered. Everett's yell at Casey brought the policeman. It was the plan of only such a man as Gonzales. But it worked."

But the shots were fired from a distance."

"Only far enough to prevent powder burns. This morning I examined a chair at the bungalow. It has marks showing how Gonzales held the gun steadied against it with one hand while he fired with the other. He ordered Pedro to send Everett in, then shot himself. His last hate-inspired thought was to push the gun in the direction of the door, where he knew Everett would stand a second later—where he would be found standing by a policeman."

"But," said the captain, "it strains the imagination to believe a man would commit

suicide merely to make an enemy appear guilty of murder."

"Not if he was of Gonzales's temperament and had every reason to want to die." Roe paused to examine a card brought in from outside. "Show him in," he said to the attendant..

A bearded, foreign-appearing man entered. Roe introduced him as Dr. Pierre Girard. "I found a bill from Doctor Girard in Gonzales's desk," Roe explained. "It contained a note that payment was desired, as Doctor Girard sails to-day for Africa on a mission for the French government. Here was a chance for Gonzales to cover a third and most serious motive. Stenographer, will you please take Doctor Girard's testimony that he was treating Gonzales for a very serious incurable disease. Thanks, doctor, for coming so near your hour for sailing."

"But Casey——" began Mr. Newton.

"The fatal instinct caught Willy," said Roe. "If he'd only stolen the revolver as directed by Gonzales. But he saw this and couldn't resist."

Roe placed upon the table a diamond stick-pin. "Not until I suggested it last night," he said, "did Mr. Everett know that he had had a burglary. Willy left no traces. But the pin was gone, and it led us to the man who stole the revolver. Willy delivered the gun to Gonzales in the afternoon. Gonzales then had no cash. He put Willy off until evening. Willy, hanging around Manhattan trying to dispose of the stone, came late for his appointment with Gonzales and was caught in the web of Gonzales's scheme."

"But how did you locate Casey?"

"Through a detective who knows every diamond broker. He sent me to the most likely go-between. Willy already had been turned down by this man. But the go-between had taken his address. After that it was easy."

"Willy should be thanked," said Newton, "for having the fatal instinct."

"Use your time," advised Roe, "telling your daughter and Everett the good news. To Willy the fatal instinct just means another trip up the river."

BANDIT ROBS A DETECTIVE

DETECTIVE FERDINAND MILLER of Nassau County, N. Y., has received so many complaints about the bandits who have been conducting a reign of terror in Baldwin, L. I., that he set out last night to investigate the matter. He went to a lonely section of Foxhurst road and waited, hoping to get a glimpse of the offenders.

Finally an automobile containing three men and a woman came along. The vehicle stopped and then a member of the party descended from the machine and approached the detective, inquiring the road to Long Beach. As Miller was about to reply a revolver was stuck into his ribs and he was held up, losing a gold watch and $50 in cash.

As the bandit turned toward the automobile, Miller seized him, but the robber freed himself and hurried to his car, escaping with his companions. The detective pursued in his own car and a pistol battle began in which the detective got the worst of it. He suffered a wound in the left arm. The bandit car drew away and disappeared in the darkness.

Later Sheriff Smith came across a deserted automobile and began an investigation, which led to the home of Christian Kammerer of 78 Stevens street, Baldwin, who explained to the sheriff that the motor car was no longer his property, as he had sold it a week ago to Frank Koerner of 163 Observer street, Rockville Centre.

Sheriff Smith sent deputies to Koerner's house, and Thomas Marino, who was identified by Miller as a member of the hold-up band, was arrested there.

Koerner and his wife were also interrogated by the authorities, and Koerner, as a result of a statement by his wife, was also taken into custody.

What the Inspector Did

By MARTIN H. KELLY

FIVE hundred years of conviction for crime and over 500,000 stolen dollars recovered. Such was the record of the work done by Inspector Thomas Byrnes and his fifty trained detectives. This happened when Byrnes was head of the department. There were several murders and one or two highway robberies that take first place as pieces of clever work, both on the part of the criminals and the detectives. The speedy and retributive operations of justice always followed closely and accurately upon the heels of the criminals engaged and show very clearly the wonderful knowledge of the thousands of thieves in New York by detectives of this city.

Among the first, and one of the most difficult cases that occupied the attention of the force for many years, was the famous trunk murder, which occurred some years ago, and for which Edward Unger got twenty years in State prison. This single case would make New York's detective force famous, even had they done nothing else worthy of recording during the year. Early in January a telegram was received by Inspector Byrnes, which stated that a trunk containing a human body cut up in many pieces had been received by the express officials in Baltimore.

Expert detectives were put on the case by the inspector, and he gave to the search as much of his personal attention as he could spare from his duties. By means of the check the trunk was traced to New York, where for a time the thread seemed lost. Express driver after express driver was personally catechised. At last a man was found who remembered something of such a trunk. Through him it was ascertained that the trunk had been taken from a Brooklyn lager beer saloon. The proprietor of the saloon knew nothing save that a stranger had brought the trunk and requested permission to leave it there for a few moments until an expressman called for it. While in the saloon the man marked the trunk "Baltimore, Md. To be called for." The man then left, and shortly after an express wagon called and took the trunk with its ghastly contents to the office, whence it was shipped as directed. The man was unknown to the police and therefore the harder to find. Days of patient, arduous search ensued, and, after a while, the man was trapped and arrested, although there was really no evidence that would have held him. But he did not know that, and his conscience made of him an arrant coward. A confession was necessary to conviction, and here Inspector Byrnes brought into play the power which had made him famous. All of the prisoner's furniture, including the sofa on which the crime had been committed, the clothes of the victim and the trunk itself were in the hands of the detectives as evidence. The murderer had been pleaded with and threatened, but to no avail. He maintained a stolid and brazen front, never faltering in his presence of mind. A room was fitted up containing the sofa, clothes and trunk, but so arranged that one seated on the sofa could not see the trunk, which stood near the only other seat in the room. In here the murderer was taken after an interview which had failed to elicit the slightest information concerning the crime. This was to be a last stroke. On entering the prisoner was seated on the sofa. At first he saw nothing, but a moment later his eye fell upon the deep red stains and he recognized the piece of furniture. His face paled, his eyes grew bloodshot and he begged to be allowed to sit elsewhere. The officer in charge expressed surprise, and inquired the cause of the prisoner's dislike to

the sofa. Although in abject torture the murderer said nothing that might convict him. He was kept on the sofa for a few minutes longer. His terror increased and he glared around the room like a wild animal. Then he was changed to a chair from which the trunk filled with the bloody clothes of the murdered man could be plainly seen, although invisible from the sofa. The prisoner sank into the chair with a deep sigh of relief. No sooner had he become settled than his eye, wandering around in guilty fear, fell upon the trunk and its contents. It was the last straw, and the man, trembling in every muscle, with bloodshot eyes and quivering lip rose from the seat and stood a moment staring with glazed eyes at the trunk, fascinated by the sight of the evidences of his crime. Then, with a long, low cry, he fell on his knees and begged to be taken to the inspector that he might confess his crime. Here came in the almost superhuman intelligence of the detective. Instead of gratifying at once the man's request he was kept for nearly an hour surrounded by the horrible remembrances of his deed. His fortitude gave way entirely. His conscience made him weak with terror. Like a child he cried and pleaded to be taken to the chief, and when finally permitted to make the confession so long sought he had no thought or idea save to tell the full story of the crime. Thus in the face of almost insurmountable objects, shrewd cunning and ability gained its end and justice triumphed. The dockets of Inspector Byrnes's office were filled to overflowing with similar cases.

In April John Talbot, with his two pals, robbed a dry goods store in Brooklyn. He was arrested, but escaped. Later his accomplices were brought to trial. The inspector believed that Talbot would either come to the trial disguised or send some one. A gang of detectives were stationed in the court to note the characters of those who came in. Among the crowd was a young man, who was known to be on friendly terms with Talbot and his crowd. After the trial he was shadowed to a house uptown. Word was sent to the inspector, who gave orders to search the house. It was then 4 o'clock in the morning. The house was searched, and Talbot found in bed in the second story. Under his bed was found a trunk containing $300,000 worth of bonds, the proceeds of a big robbery in Philadelphia. Talbot was brought before Judge Moore, and received ten years in State prison. During the summer big cases were scarce, the crooks being engaged in the country and other smaller cities.

On May 11 Mrs. Ernst, an old woman, was robbed and foully murdered in New Haven, Conn. Just before a tall man had been seen in New York in company with a notorious thief. The fact that he was then unknown to the detectives caused him to be closely watched until it was ascertained that his name was Chamberlain, and that he lived in New Haven. The man with whom he was generally seen was Jimmy Taylor, a New York crook. On May 10 both men disappeared, returning May 12 to New York. On the day before their return the news of the murder was received and the detectives were on the watch. Chamberlain and Taylor came back with money and made free use of it. As they had not been seen in New Haven there was not enough ground for arrest, so they were watched by eyes that are never closed. Chamberlain's lady friend was found, interrogated by disguised detectives, and the fact learned that both men had been in New Haven on the night of the robbery and murder. Link by link the chain was woven, until finally the evidence was complete, the men were arrested, and each man sentenced for life to the State prison. In this case there was originally no clue whatever to the murderers. But a strange man had been seen before the crime and that fact reported. He was located for future use. The murder occurred and the detective mind instantly reverted to the stranger. Research proved that he was not only the murderer, but that the deed had been long before planned, Chamberlain had come to New York for an assistant and obtained Taylor. Had the detectives permitted Chamberlain to come here without noticing his advent and ferreting out his character and home, the chances are that the murderers would not have been dis-

covered. They paid the price of eternal vigilance and the public got safety in return.

On May 24 a lady living on Fifth avenue took some diamonds to Tiffany's to be cleaned. When she presented the jewelry to the clerk she was informed that her supposed precious stones were paste. In vain she asserted that her husband had purchased the jewels there, the fact remained they were imitations. The lady, mortified by her position, sent for her husband. He in turn sent for Byrnes. The matter was placed in his hands. In less than a week the thief who had stolen the diamonds and substituted paste stones was in jail. His name was Theodore Hohr. He had been the family butler, but had left just before the lady's discovery. Other families in which he had worked were seen and investigation proved that the same crime had been committed before, but not discovered. Of the man himself there was not the slightest trace. He had had ample time to get away before the theft became known. The fact that he was unknown to the detectives made the job harder. A description was obtained. It was learned that Hohr was fond of racing, and all the tracks were watched. One day a man answering his description was seen by two of the inspector's men at the Guttenburg races. Having no writ the detectives never lost sight of their man until he returned to New York, when he was arrested. He was subsequently identified by the lady, confessed his guilt, and got four years in the State prison. It was another case where detective intelligence must do duty for information, and make bricks of evidence out of straws of observation.

A case that showed to a large extent the wide range of acquaintance enjoyed by the detectives is the highway robbery of Mr. Boch, December 19, on Mott street. Mr. Boch and his daughter were walking along Mott street, and were in the rear of the St. Patrick's Cathedral when a man seized Mr. Boch by the neck and tore from the old man's shirt bosom a diamond pin worth about $500 or $600. To the thief its value could not have been more than $200 or less, somewhere near that sum being the amount that might be realized on the pin.

When the robbery was reported there was no clue, as neither Mr. Boch nor his daughter could give any adequate description of the man. Inspector Byrnes called two or three of his men before him, and a consultation was held. The first thing considered was the number of thieves in New York who had the courage to do such a "haul-away" job, as they are called in detective parlance. Without a word each of the four detectives wrote some names on a piece of paper and handed them to the inspector. Many of the names on the papers were different, but, strange to say, one name appeared on each slip; it was "Reck Donovan," whose bold and fearless work in that line was well known to the detectives, and had gained him the sobriquet of "Reckless," which had been abbreviated to "Reck." This man was the only thief upon whom all the detectives agreed. Consequently, as in other cases, the knowledge and intelligence of the force supplied the missing clue. Donovan was arrested. When brought to the inspector's office he declined to make any confession. Identification was necessary. Mr. Boch was sent for and shown seven men, among whom was the thief.

The robber's victim was an old man, and the assault had frightened him and rendered him nervous. He cast his eye along the line of men, and as he looked upon the last man but one his limbs trembled, and with an inarticulate cry he sunk to the floor, but was caught by the inspector, taken out of the room and revived. He seemed fearful of returning to the room, but was finally persuaded. Meanwhile the positions of the men had been changed. The old man came in and looked them over, and pointing to the same man whose position was altered, exclaimed: "That's the man, inspector; that's the man!" It was "Reck" Donovan. Then the men were changed into another room and Mr. Boch's daughter was called. She entered the room fearlessly, looked at the men a moment and walked straight up to the most daring thief in New York City and, taking him by the collar, exclaimed: "This is the loafer that robbed my father!"

The identification was correct. Other evidence was brought to bear on Donovan, but he insisted upon pleading not guilty. If convicted under this plea he could be given not less than twenty years nor more than forty, as it was not his first offense, and the law requires that highway robbery with assault is punishable by twenty years at the greatest for the first offense, and forty is the possible limit for the second. In order to secure a possible $200, under circumstances that of themselves almost insured conviction, this man was ready to pledge forty years of his life as security for his success. He weakened and changed his plea to guilty. This of itself is a practical confession, and his conviction for a long term followed.

The silk robbery in the Custom House is another triumph for Inspector Byrnes and his men. The thieves had been so clever in their forgeries and work that the very officials whose names were forged could not detect the crime. The case was reported to Byrnes December 17, and by December 21 the thieves were caught and the property recovered.

Thomas H. Davis stole $15,000 in cash from the New York Central and Hudson River Railway on or about December 17. The case was reported to Inspector Byrnes December 18, and Mr. Davis arrested and jailed December 21. Work of this sort, which combines rapidity and accuracy with unerring accuracy of conclusion, was the basis of the success of the inspector and his men.

On November 23 occurred the famous Matthew Morgan diamond robbery. While the family were at dinner a thief entered the second-story window and took from Mrs. Morgan's dressing case nearly $10,000 worth of diamonds. The jewels were not missed until late in the evening, and there was not the slightest evidence of the manner or means used in the burglary. William Dorsey, a well-known thief, had been seen for several days hanging around and evidently in hard luck. The fact was noted and reported. When the robbery occurred Inspector Byrnes looked over his crooks on hand and thought of Dorsey at once. After the robbery he was evidently flush, but as there was not the slightest evidence to connect him with the theft, the department was forced to wait and work.

The negro Dorsey was on friendly terms with a colored woman uptown, and through her it was decided to work. A suitable man was found and sent up there. In his working of the case he managed to gain admission to the woman's room, where he saw on the mantelpiece a common $1 clock that had been taken from the servant's room in Mr. Morgan's house. Why the thief with $10,000 worth of diamonds should stop to steal a $1 clock was a mystery, but the petty theft was the first piece of direct evidence secured which connected Dorsey with the robbery. Meanwhile two men had been arrested on the suspicion that they had received the stolen property, but no proof was to be had. After finding the clock the detective who was "working" the girl managed to get a look at all her jewelry. The only thing found was a little gold safety-pin of very little value, but which was considered to be a piece of the jewelry stolen. In order to prove it the pin was taken to Tiffany's. Now, it is not generally known that upon every piece of jewelry made by Tiffany, however small the article, there is a number. Often no one but an employee of the firm can find it, as was true in this case.

The pin was identified by Tiffany and recourse to the register of sales showed that it had been sold to Mrs. Morgan. After this Dorsey was arrested in a little hall bedroom uptown. The room was searched at first and nothing could be found. The inspector then brought to bear his knowledge of criminals. It is a fact known to detectives that negro criminals are to a great degree superstitious about their booty, never allowing it to go very far from their persons, believing that it must be kept almost covered by their hands to insure against detection. In this case every piece of furniture had been taken apart, the mattress ripped up, and the room entirely cleaned up. Still no trace of the jewelry was found. For a moment the officers were nonplussed. Then it was remembered that when first searched there was a piece of carpet not

over a yard square on the floor of the room. The carpet had been kicked away.

One of the detectives in a moment of inspiration got down on his knees and closely examined the floor where the carpet was laid. Sure enough, two delicate hair-like seams ran across a single board. The floor was sounded and then ripped up. Underneath was a box in which was found all the settings of the stolen jewelry, the stones having been removed from everything save one or two little earrings. Dorsey resisted the attempts at arrest, but was overpowered and jailed. No trace of the diamonds had been found. Finally it was conveyed to the two men arrested as receivers that their chances for discharge were very poor indeed. Whether or not such was the fact was immaterial. However that may have been the end was satisfactory, for the night of that day a man called upon the inspector at his house and delivered $7,000 worth of diamonds. The man who made the restitution was entirely unsuspected, and the only cause of the return was the effort to save the men arrested as accomplices from a punishment that was in fact most improbable. In this manner a thief was caught and $10,000 worth of property recovered in circumstances which on their face offered not the slightest evidence or clue of the robber. Case after case might be cited revealing work of the same perspicacious and energetic nature. There is little doubt that the perfection of New York's detective force will challenge comparison with any force in the world. Wall Street had not lost ten cents from professional thieves in years. There is not a bank robber or thief of any note in New York City that dared go below Fulton street without permission from inspector Byrnes, and every day he received applications from such crooks for the necessary permission, and when given it was generally accompanied by an officer to escort the crooked gentleman through the streets that are lined with banks and wealthy brokers' offices. The fact that New York is the Mecca of foreign crooks makes a constant knowledge of the thieves in town most difficult to obtain. But there is a system through the whole detective bureau that is bound to tell in the end. If a crook is seen on the street with a stranger, the detective who sees him never loses sight of his game until he has located the stranger and discovered his character and status. In this way the foreign thieves are kept in hand and detectives of every nationality and grade are employed in the different channels. Among the many employed in the department there exists the most cordial good will and subservience to the best interests of the force.

Not only has the detective service improved in its efficiency and energy, but it has been elevated in more than one sense. The men know what is expected of them by their chief, and know also that the offer of less than his expectations is apt to be met with a transfer, which means practical reduction.

Taken altogether, New York's detective service shows a record which cannot be equaled by any similar department in the world.

TREASURY WARNS OF NEW COUNTERFEIT $20 NOTE

THE Treasury Department in a circular letter announces the existence of a new counterfeit $20 Federal Reserve note. The note is described as on the Federal Reserve Bank at Atlanta, Ga., check letter H, face plate No. 33, signature of W. G. McAdoo, Secretary of the United States, and portrait of Cleveland.

This counterfeit appears to have been printed from lithographic plates on paper believed to be genuine and obtained by bleaching genuine bills of smaller denominations.

The bill is very crudely printed, the portrait of Cleveland being particularly bad. The numbering looks as though it were by hand, and should be the means of detecting the counterfeit if examined.

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Weird Belief About Spiritland

WEIRD ceremonies and strange beliefs, amounting almost to fanaticism, have been partially revealed through the filing of a contest of the will of Walter Lockwood Thales, who for a third of a century led his disciples in practicing Oriental teachings. He lived at Placentia, Cal.

Thirty-five years ago Thale went to California and founded his cult. People from all over the world came to join the mysterious colony, which was secluded from the rest of the world by an eight-foot wire fence surrounding the estate.

The peculiar tenets which Thales taught his followers may be briefly summarized as follows:

That the living, if members of the colony, were in constant communion with the dead. To this end, Thales asserted that he had the seams of his head opened to let the spirits in. It was understood that he seldom slept, and when he did sleep, sat upright in a chair so that the spirits of the departed could sit on his lap.

That if the bodies of the dead were buried beneath the trees in the orchard, the fruitfulness of the crop was increased twofold. As a matter of fact, the Thales land has for many years been known as one of the most productive properties in Orange County.

All of the rooms in the "Mystery House" were built in circular form. Thales declared that square rooms were a bad thing for the spirits, who were apt to become confused and run into a room and stay there. It wouldn't be so bad for the good spirits to remain, he told his followers, but if the bad ones ever decided to make the room permanent headquarters, all was lost—or words to that effect.

So far as known, members of the colony have been restricted to a vegetarian diet.

Neighbors who live near the Thales estate know little of what goes on behind the wire gates. They talk in whispers when they pass the place, and nobody ever visits the cult headquarters.

Many of the original followers of Thales are dead, and their bodies are buried beneath the trees.

When a disciple dies the body is wrapped in a sheet and with this simple covering is received into the bosom of Mother Earth.

Thales is alleged to have buried much money in the ground underneath the "Mystery House." The burial of the gold, he told his followers, would appease the spirits.

He also told them he could remember well the day he was born. He was greatly incensed at his mother, he said, because she placed a blanket around his head, almost smothering him.

Mystery Magazine

The feature stories already published in this magazine are worth reading. The following are the titles of the novelettes contained in the numbers already printed.

1 "The Eel Man," by Robert Carlton Brown.
2 "Zitana of Maison Rouge," by F. W. Doughty.
3 "The Mysterious Web," by Armstrong Perry.
4 "Under the Hypnotic Spell," by Dr. H. Enton.
5 "The Silken Sheath," by Crittenden Marriott.
6 "A Fortune Teller's Secret," by Gladys Hall.
7 "The Mystic Emblem," by Marie Coolidge Rask.
8 "The Cards of Fate," by William Goode.
9 "Mr. Bachellor's Apartments," by W. H. Osborne.
10 "The Inner Wheel," by Octavius Roy Cohen.
11 "The Voice of the Valley," by Robt. C. Brown.
12 "The Sign of the Seven Sharks," by C. F. Oursler.
13 "Under a Mask," By Crittenden Marriott.
14 "Case 4,444," by Gladys Hall.
15 "After a Million," by Police Captain Howard.
16 "Shadowing the Blue Triangle," by C. F. Oursler.
17 "The Case of Captain Fortesque," by R. Ingalls.
18 "The Bird-Headed Sphinx," by Edith S. Tupper.
19 "The Double Mystery," by Dr. Harry Enton.
20 "The Magician Detective," by C. F. Oursler.
21 "King Cobra Mystery," by George Gilbert.
22 "The Haunted Corridors," by Wm. H. Osborne.
23 "No Man's Man," by Maxwell Smith.
24 "The Trevor Puzzle," by T. C. Harbaugh.
25 "The Trail of Roses," by Edmund Condon.
26 "The Hindoo Vanishing Clue," by Pauline Bouve.
27 "Who Was Guilty?" by Beulah Poynter.
28 "The Evil Eye," by Chas. F. Oursler.
29 "The Thirteenth Door," by Edith S. Tupper.
30 "The Game of Detective Carew," by L. Jerome.
31 "Law-maker and Law-breaker," by B. Poynter
32 "The Counterfeit Heiress," by Inspector Harrigan.
33 "Tracked to China," by Chief Roger O'Brien.
34 "After the German Spies," by May Halsey Miller.
35 "The Clue in the Box," by Alexander Douglas.
36 "Trained by a French Detective," by Rene Renaud.
37 "A Drop of Ink," by Lieut. Robt. W. Warden.
38 "The Ten Doctors," by Allan Arnold Fox.
39 "The Stain on Page 61," by Chas. T. Jordan.
40 "A Masked Mystery," by Police Sergeant Kelly.
41 "The Black Soul," by Beulah Poynter.
42 "The Sanctuary," by Wm. H. Osborne.
43 "The Mystery of the Seven Shadows," by Chas. F. Oursler.
44 "The Sign of the Dragon," by C. Martin Eddy, Jr.
45 "The Magic of Detective Woo Fang," by Frank F. Whitfield.
46 "The Decoy," by William Hamilton Osborne.
47 "The House With 30 Steps," by Ralph D. Porter.
48 "When the Clock Struck 13," by Dr. Harry Enton.
49 "A Piece of Blotting Paper," by Dorothy Weber.
50 "The $200,000 Mystery," by Ethel Rosemon.
51 "The Case of Dr. Brice," by Mary R. P. Hatch.
52 "The Phantom Motor," by Laura R. Montgomery.
53 "The Blackjack," by William H. Osborne.
54 "The Whispering Head," by Chas. F. Oursler.
55 "The Inspector's Strange Case," by B. Poynter.
56 "The Secret of the Sealed Book," by E. Rosemon.
57 "The Clue of Steel," by Willis Lathrop.
58 "Alias Louis Vardon," by Wm. H. Osborne.
59 "Mystery of the Old-Time Club," by C. Bingold.
60 "Caught With the Evidence," by Ethel Rosemon.
61 "A Little Gold Spider," by Cecil Burleigh.
62 "The Velvet Touch," by Julian Darrow.
63 "The Clue of the Red Lamp," by C. F. Oursler.
64 "The Scheme of Solomon Snare," by W. Osborne.
65 "Quicker Than the Eye," by Ralph Cummins.
66 "The Clue of the Dark Room," by H. Craigie.
67 "The Tongue of Osiris," by Marc Edmund Jones.
68 "Detective Wade's Big Case," by E. Rosemon.
69 "The Spirit Bell," by Charles Fulton Oursler.
70 "The House Behind the Wall," by Julian Darrow.
71 "The Admiral's Spoons," by Wm. H. Osborne.
72 "The Canine Clue," by Thomas J. Lally.
73 "The Psychic Enemy," by Arthur Wm. Anderson.
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75 "On the Wrong Trail," by Ethel Rosemon.
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77 "The Little White Room," by Edmund Jones.
78 "The Stolen Year," by Edmund Elliot.
79 "The Affair at Hollywood House," by W. Kofoed.
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82 "Who Killed McNally?" by Beulah Poynter.
83 "The Clue of the Whorl," by Katherine Stagg.
84 "The 'Czar' and the Ring," by Edmund Elliot.
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95 "The Trick of the Great Yen How," by William Hamilton Osborne.
96 "At Moriarity's," by Fred S. Shuey.
97 "The Lost Star of the Films," by Jack Bechdolt.
98 "Counterfeit Clues," by Chas. F. Oursler.
99 "The Cross," by W. S. Ingram.
100 "The Secret Service Mystery," by Hamilton Craigie and Elliot Balestier.
101 "A Crimson Price," by Elliott Lester.
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113 "A Clue by Radio," by Capt. Jack Static.
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115 "A Man From Headquarters," by H. Craigie.
116 "The Girl in the Case," by Carl Glick.
117 "A Scientific Detective," by D. G. McDonald.
118 "Number Nine Queer Street," by Jack Bechdolt.
119 "Trailed by a Private Detective," by Gottlieb Jacobs.
120 "The Mouse Trap," by Edith Sessions Tupper.
121 "A Radio Mystery," by Capt. Jack Static
122 "The Clawing Death," by Beulah Poynter.

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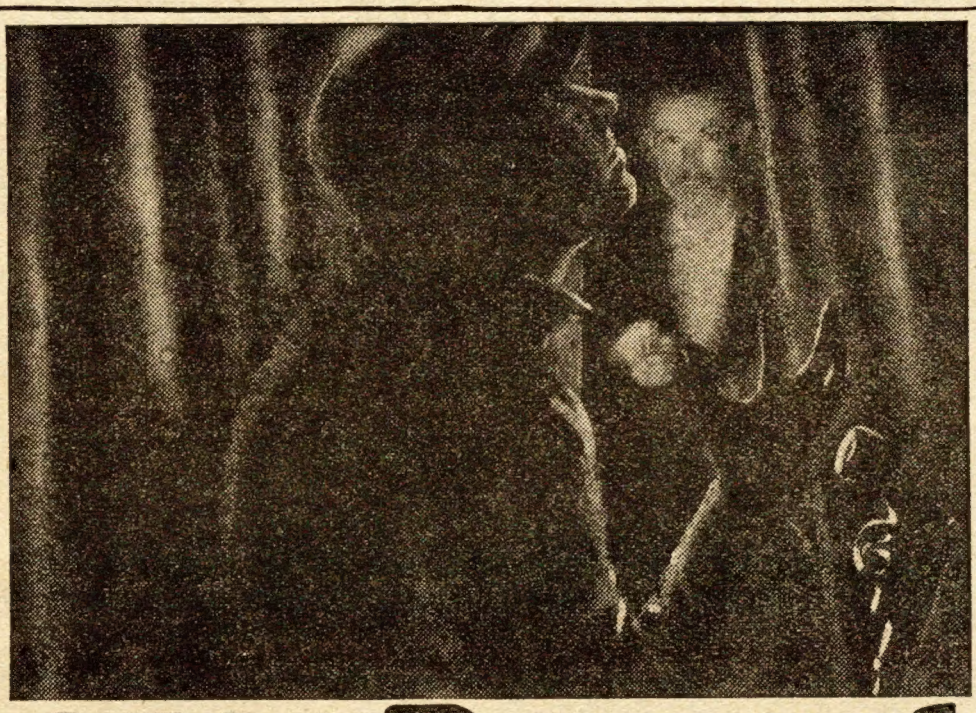

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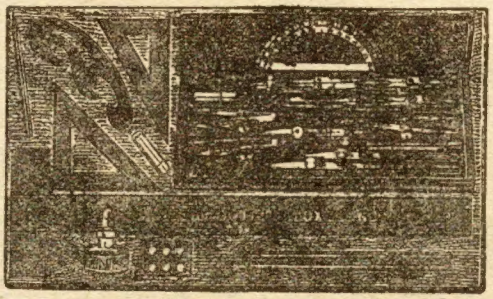

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